Hanna Batatu

The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq

A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and of its Communists, Ba'thists, and Free Officers

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SAQI

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To the People of Iraq

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PREFACE

The work here presented is arranged in three books. The first comprises a study of the landowners and the men of money and commerce of prerepublican Iraq. The accent of the discussion is on the wealthier or more influential layers of these classes in the period of the monarchy, that is, in the years 1921-1958. However, as some of the traits of the social structure in monarchic days had their roots in the more distant past, the analysis ranges, at certain points, back to Ottoman times.

Apart from throwing some light on the circumstances, the power, the function, the way of thought, the political behavior, the social standing, and the origin of the position or of the wealth of the landed, commercial, and moneyed elements, the aim of this part of the study is to find out whether a class approach would open to view historical relations or social features that would otherwise remain beyond vision or, to put it more generally, whether such an approach, when applied to a post-World War I Arab society, is capable of yielding new insights or valuable results.

Anyhow, it is hoped that the first book will render it easier to understand the second and third books, which deal with the Communists, Ba‘thists, and Free Officers, that is, with the movements that have been, in their leading layers, the chief expressions of Iraq’s intermediate classes, the laboring people being of real importance only in the Communist ranks and merely in some areas or at certain points in the past. To trace the origins of these movements, seek out the roots of the thoughts and emotions by which they were impelled, describe their organizational forms and social structures, reconstruct their internal life in its significant moments, follow them through the ebbs and flows of their fortunes, and assess the impact they had on their country and its history–such have been the main preoccupations in the second and third books.

Though in these pages adequate consideration is given to the Ba‘th party and the Free Officers, the history of the Communists is represented on a larger scale. One reason is that this history forms the original nucleus out of which the books in question have grown. But the Communists also long anteceded the other forces, and have had deeper influence upon the intelligentsia and at the mass level of society.

Perhaps the exposition lapses here and there into minutiae or verges on a scholarly overkill. Particularly in the chapters relating to the early phases of communism, when the party was composed of a small number of isolated figures, too much attention may have been given to individual characteristics; but the patient reader will realize that then–in the thirties–much depended on personal and accidental factors, the movement having become objectively grounded only in the succeeding decade. Moreover, even in these chapters care was taken not to lose sight of the wider context, and to bring to the surface–except where otherwise necessary–only the private details that could simultaneously throw light upon the condition of society. At the same time, the premises of the discussion throughout have been real living Communists–and Ba‘thists and Free Officers–in their real concrete circumstances and interactions.

The present work draws in part upon the secret records of Iraq’s Directorate General of Internal Security, that is, among other things, upon: (a) the files of the Iraqi political police on the various parties and on every active political figure in the country in the period of the monarchy; (b) papers and records seized by the police and belonging to the leading committees of the Communists and Ba‘thists; (c) Communist manuscripts found in the prisons of Kūt and Ba’qūbah; (d) verbatim records of the investigation of the important members of the Communist cadre captured by the Ba‘thists in 1963; (e) the secret British Intelligence Reports, Abstracts of Intelligence, and Supplements to the Abstracts of Intelligence referring to the period 1917-1931; and (0 the confidential files of Major J. F. Wilkins, one-time head of the “Criminal Investigation Department” and of the “Special Branch,” and “Technical Advisor” of the Iraq government.

The work is also based upon the British public records, Arabic printed sources, the unpublished and detailed memoirs of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, secretary of the Free Officers’ Movement, and on a mass of

interviews with Iraqis of various colorings and in different areas of life, including activists and leading figures.

The vast amount of data in the police records was in part arid and unimaginative. Much of the rest was unwieldy and not easily reconcilable nor readily woven into a meaningful sequence. I used these records, to be sure, with caution, and took account only of the evidence that appeared incontrovertible or was least open to doubt. I also checked and counterchecked with the better informed of eyewitnesses and participants, and took extreme care not to commit errors or injustices. But I am aware of my limitations, and hope that knowledgeable Iraqis will call to my attention mistakes or shortcomings that I could not avoid.

In the course of my research, when I met in the prison of Ba'qubāh one of the leading Communists, I began, as was my wont with the political prisoners I interviewed, by making clear that I had read his personal police file and wanted only to acquaint myself with his own version of his personal history. I also assured him that, in undertaking the study of the party to which he belonged, I was impelled by no other motive than the desire to understand it and that, to the extent that my limited vision permitted, I would be faithful to the facts and would publish the results whether they be to the advantage of the Communists or to their disadvantage. The Communist leader wondered whether, in view of my connection with an American university, detachment on a subject like communism was at all possible.

I recall this incident to emphasize the standpoint from which the present account has been written. It has not been my intention to make a partisan or polemical contribution, or to add to the controversies that torment Iraq. Far from it. Perhaps it is not possible to write a history of a Communist party that is neither pro-Communist nor anti-Communist. But this is, anyhow, what I have sought to do. This has also been my guideline with regard to the other political and social forces. Of course, it does not follow that my way of looking at things is not involved in these pages. In any historical work one does, there is history, but there is also always something of oneself. This is unavoidable. One, if only unwittingly, bares one's own narrowness of experience and one's intellectual and temperamental inadequacies.

Many years ago, when I was a student in the United States and, on account of the lack of source material, came to a standstill in my work on Iraq, ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd Dāmirchī, a friend from Baghdād, offered to advance me the cost of a trip to his country. His generous loan, which I was only able to repay after four long years, subsequent research fellowships or grants from the Harvard Russian and Middle East Centers and the Center of International Studies at M.I.T., and a nine months’ residence as a Senior Research Fellow at Princeton made possible the study I now present.

At one point or another in the course of this undertaking I received courteous encouragement from the late Professors Merle Fainsod and H. A. R. Gibb, and from Professors Adam Ulam, Charles Issawi, Elie Salem, George Kirk, L. Carl Brown, Robert A. Fernea, and Nadav Safran. I have been especially fortunate in the unfailing patience and interest of Professor William E. Griffith, the sympathetic understanding of Professor A. J. Meyer, and the consistent support of my department at the American University of Beirut. The much appreciated kindnesses of Professor Abram Udovitch and Sanford G. Thatcher and a generous subsidy from the Earhart Foundation, obtained through the invaluable help of Professors William E. Griffith, A. J. Meyer, and Harold Hanham, facilitated the publication of the manuscript. To Professors Gil Gunder-son, Samir Khalaf, and Gerald Obermeyer I am very grateful for their comments on Chapter One, and to Margaret Case for the care and conscientiousness with which she prepared the book for the press. I would also like to thank Laury Egan for the design, Trudy Glucksberg for the maps and artwork, and Helen Mann for varityping the tables and the manuscript.

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The maps are based on Dr. Aḥmad Sūsah’s *Aṭlas-ul-‘Irāq-il-Idārī* (The Atlas of Administrative Iraq), Baghdād, 1952, with information that relates

to this book added by the author.

I am also greatly indebted to those very many Iraqis in the government, the opposition, the army, the universities, in the business and tribal worlds, and in the prisons and the underground, who are cited in the footnotes or in the text or must remain nameless, and who never denied me a helping hand and contributed so much to my understanding of their country and their people.

BOOK ONE

THE OLD SOCIAL CLASSES

PART I

INTRODUCTION

1

THE “OLD SOCIAL CLASSES”: PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL CLARIFICATIONS; APPLICABILITY OF CONCEPT; DIFFICULTIES OF ANALYSIS

It has often been maintained that the classic sociological class analysis–an analysis that draws essentially upon the insights of Karl Marx and Max Weber–is inapplicable to Arab societies, or that in Arab societies there are no such things as “classes.” This is a generalization apart from the evidence, at least as far as post-World War I Arab societies are concerned. Obviously, an attitude one way or the other on this question cannot be taken in the absence of specialized factual studies on modern Arab social structures. To reject class analysis out of hand, merely on account of contingent ideological associations, is, from a scholarly point of view, inadmissible.

It is necessary to underline at once the tentative nature of the present inquiry. A concrete analysis of classes is an extremely difficult undertaking. It presupposes, on the one hand, a grasp of the objective tendencies and constraints of the social structure or structures of which the classes are integral parts; and, on the other hand, the mastery of a wealth of details, especially as regards economically and politically effective individuals and families and their interrelationships, details that are seldom within easy reach.

More than that, the classes under study–the upper landowners and the upper men of money and commerce in the time of the monarchy (1921-1958)–were relatively unstable, at least for much of that period. Of course, a class structure is in principle not characterized by fixity. However, due to a number of factors–among others, the rapid buildup of monarchic state institutions, the world-wide depression of 1929, the land settlement policies

of 1932 and 1938, the severe shortages and the spiraling inflation during the Second World War and in the immediate postwar years, the mass exodus of the Jews in the late forties and early fifties, the sudden inpouring of oil money after 1952, and the fourfold increase of the population of Baghdād between 1922 and 1957–there were comparatively swift movements into and out of the abovementioned classes. There were also abrupt shifts within them in an upward or downward direction. In these movements and shifts were involved not only individuals and families, but whole groups: the rise of the Shī'ī component of the trading class after the exodus of the Jewish merchants is a case in point. At the same time, some class elements were progressing in one respect but declining in another: the enrichment, for instance, of many landed tribal shaikhs at the expense of their rank-and-file tribesmen, by undermining tribal ties, weakened their traditional social position. In other words, these shaikhs were simultaneously rising as a class and decaying as a traditional status group.

Over and above this, as hinted by the illustrations just given, the classes in question consisted of diverse elements. They were differentiable not merely ethnically–into Arabs, Kurds, Turkomans, Arameans, and Armenians–or from the standpoint of sect or religion–into Sunnī, Shī'ī, Christian, or Jewish–or in terms of the size of their land, or the level of their income or capital, or the degree of their political influence or social prestige, or the consistence or inconsistence of their interests with British economic penetration; but in one further important sense: different elements or different status groups within the very same class–for example, the landed tribal aghas or shaikhs, the landed tribal or urban *sādāh*, the landed *'ulamā'*, the landed chiefs of mystic orders, the landed "aristocrat"-officials, the landed speculators, merchants, ṣarrāfs, and industrialists, and the landed ex-Sharifian officers[1]–carried in varying proportions the imprints of different social forms or different historical periods. This was the consequence, partly, of the fact that under the Ottomans Iraq consisted to no little extent of distinct, self-absorbed, feebly interconnected societies; and, partly, of the interpenetration of a social form oriented toward money making and the expansion of private property; and shaped essentially by Iraq's relatively recent ties to a world market resting on big industry, with older social forms attaching value to noble lineage, or knowledge of religion, or possession of sanctity or fighting prowess in tribal raids; and

dominated largely by local bonds and local outlooks, by small-scale handicraft or subsistence agricultural production, and, outside of the towns, by state or communal tribal forms of property.

Does it follow from the diversity of the component elements of Iraq's classes and the differences in the conditions of these elements that, strictly speaking, they were not classes? An answer to this question necessitates a preliminary attempt at a precise statement of the essential nature of the phenomenon.

What is a class? What are its distinctive characteristics? At the risk of being very elementary but in the hope of achieving clarity, I should state, first, that I adhere to the classic sociological standpoint that a "class" is, in essence, an economically based formation, though it ultimately refers to the social position of the constituent individuals or families in its varied aspects. Through inadvertence I may, here and there in the course of this work, use the term loosely in other than this primary sense, but this should be evident from the context. Second, from the same standpoint, the notion "class" demands or presupposes the notion "inequality," and therefore implies at least one other class–or, in the dichotomic view, merely one other main class, along with minor groups–the "inequality" being basically with respect to "property." To be more explicit, I find it difficult not to agree with James Madison, Karl Marx, and Max Weber that "property" and "lack of property" form the *fundamental* elements of the class (or, in Madison's language, "factional") situation, and that this antithesis contains the seeds of an antagonistic relationship. To accept this position is not necessarily to accept the different series of concepts that each of the three thinkers associate with it, or their underlying assumptions or implications unless, of course, they are empirically verifiable or applicable to the case in hand.

At the same time, it is beyond dispute that "property" varies in character or significance under varying circumstances and could, therefore, be properly understood only in its specific historical context. It is also incontrovertible that a class is a multiform and differentiated phenomenon. It may, as Max Weber suggested, exist in a distinct form of its own or as an element within a status group (such as a landed section within a group of tribal shaikhs) or may embody several different status groups, as already noted. It may embrace an "élite" (such as "a labour aristocracy") and a

“mass” (such as the majority of workers). In this sense, “élite” and “class” are not mutually exclusive concepts. A class may also comprise upper, middle, and lower subclasses, which, as both Marx and Weber pointed out, may be related to one another as are distinct classes. In Iraq, for example, the bigger and smaller landowners stood on opposite sides, or had conflicting political sympathies, in the revolutionary years of 1958-1959. Consequently, it is inadequate to define a class formally as an aggregate of persons marked off by a common or similar relationship to the means of production, or playing an identical or similar role in the process of production, inasmuch as the difference in the degree or extent of ownership or control of the means of production could be so great as to constitute, in terms of its social consequences, a qualitative and not merely quantitative difference.

Moreover, this writer accepts the view that a class need not–and in fact does not–at every point of its historical existence act or feel as a unit. In other words, it need not be an organized and self-conscious group. But this does not mean that it is, therefore, merely an intellectual category, that is, something foisted on reality by the mind. The members of a class may not be class-conscious in their behavior, but their behavior could nonetheless be class-conditioned. Obviously, a certain similarity in the economic situation of a group may make–despite differences between its members in other respects–for a certain similarity of interests and inclinations, even though this may remain hidden from their view. More than that, it is necessary to distinguish between a dynamic and a passive class feeling or consciousness: in Iraq under the monarchy a landless peasant, even in districts farthest removed from new ideological influences, was aware of the economic and social distance separating him from his landed shaikh, and knew, for instance, that he could not aspire to take the shaikh’s daughter in marriage; and, though he may not have been conscious of a common tie with peasants on another estate or in another region, he was alive to the fact that the peasants laboring with him shared in his poverty; but, more often than not, he acquiesced in this situation as fated, and was not actuated by any desire to upset it.

At this point it may seem that I have not been defining the concept of class but defining it away. In fact, I have been merely emphasizing the reality of the objective–as distinguished from the subjective–aspect of class,

that is, the reality of what Marx called, in Hegel's language, the "class in itself." The process of the crystallization of a class into a relatively stable, sharply identifiable, and politically conscious social entity, that is, into a "class for itself" is, of course, very complex, and depends on the concrete correlation of circumstances.

In the light of the preceding clarifications, it should be emphasized that the classes of monarchic Iraq–but not necessarily their component elements–are "old" (the reference is to the attribute in the title of this work) only from the perspective of the post-1958 period, inasmuch as they are, to a predominant extent, the product of the gradual attachment of the country in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to a British imperial market reposing on large-scale industry. Prior to this, private property, in the sense of private appropriation of the means of production, was nonexistent outside Iraq's towns and their immediate hinterland, and even in the towns had a precarious basis; and, save for *dhurriyyah waqf*, was exposed to recurring confiscation: in Ottoman-Mamlūk Baghdād of the latter half of the eighteenth century, the accumulation of property or riches–except perhaps by families with ascribed religious standing–was not safe inasmuch as it was liable to attract the envy or greed of the ruling pashas. "Property" was not, therefore, at that time the dominant basis of stratification. "Classes" existed, to be sure, in urban areas, but in a rudimentary form and in parallel structures within the recognized religious communities. They also remained purely economic in character, and did not acquire a political aspect. Moreover, by reason of the fact that eighteenth-century Iraq was composed of plural, relatively isolated, and often virtually autonomous city-states and tribal confederations, urban "class" ties tended to be in essence local ties rather than ties on the scale of the whole country, except in the case of some of the money dealers or merchants–especially the transit merchants–who operated within broader frameworks and had urban-tribal, inter-Arab, or even international class links.

If "property" or "classes" were secondary phenomena, what were the more important bases or forms of stratification in Mamlūk Iraq? By virtue of the plurality of its societies and their comparative geographic isolation, its structural physiognomy was somewhat complicated.

In the first place, the social structures of the various towns or regions, though possessing common features, differed according to differences in their historical functions or in their natural circumstances. Obviously, the social character of a purely tribal market town, such as Sūq-ush-Shuyūkh, diverged markedly from that of a Shī‘ī holy city and a center of pilgrimage such as Najaf, or from that of Baghdād, which had long been a main seat of government and a commercial emporium of international significance. Again, local or regional social structures could not but bear the effects of such natural facts as the recurrent devastating inundations of the central and southern parts of Iraq and the concomitant freedom of its northern areas from flooding. This, in my opinion, had something to do with the relative looseness or openness of the forms of social life in Baghdād, and the somewhat greater rigidity of those in Mosul. The same factor, by adding to the mobility of the greater number of Arab tribal cultivators, must have played a role in rescuing them from the serf-like condition of Kurdistan's traditional peasants: the non-tribal *miskīns* or "miserables."

At any rate, at Baghdād proper several principles of stratification were simultaneously at work. In addition to a hierarchy of wealth, there were hierarchies of religion: Moslems above Christians, Jews, and Sabeans; of sect: Sunnīs above Shī‘īs; of ethnic groups: Georgians and Turks above Arabs, Kurds, and Persians; and of power: the Georgian freedmen above all the rest. There was also a hierarchy of status, the socially dominant groups being the Georgian pashas and their chief military officers and civil lieutenants; the *sādāh,* claimants of descent from the Prophet; the leaders of the *Ṣūfī* orders and the upper Sunnī *‘ulamā’*, who were often also *sādāh;* and the *chalabīs*, who were merchants of high social standing. The position of the *chalabīs* rested essentially on wealth; that of the Georgians on their semimonopoly of the means of violence, their *esprit de corps* as ex-slaves, their privileged and elaborate military and administrative training, their intimate knowledge of local affairs, and their frequent alliance with the *sādāh,* the chiefs of the mystic fraternities, and the higher *‘ulamā’*, whose standing was legitimized by religion and reposed on the prestige of birth–claimed kinship to Muḥammad or to a saint–or on the knowledge of the holy law. Of course, there was a great degree of coincidence between all these hierarchies; that is, those who stood, say, at the top in the scale of power tended also to stand at the top with respect to wealth or in terms of

religious, sectarian, ethnic, or status affiliation. It is pertinent to add that, on account of the incessant conflicts between Baghdād and one or the other of the surrounding tribal confederations, and the precarious relationships between the Mamlūks and the Ottoman sultan, political power was as unstable as property: out of the nine Mamlūk pashas, one was pulled down and six were put to death.[2] It would, therefore, appear that the least transient social position was that defined by special religious status.

If we turn to the countryside, we find that the tribal structure was basically oriented toward the military role. This fact largely defined the existing tribal hierarchy, the mobile warring People of the Camel standing, in the Arab flatlands, above the People of the Sheep or of Marshes or of Agriculture. The dominant status groups, who tended to be drawn from the former order, were the *shaikhs al-mashāyikh* (the chiefs of the tribal confederations) and the shaikhs (the leaders of the constituent fighting tribes). In montane Kurdistan, their equivalents were the tribal begs or aghas, who were drawn from mounted nomads and lorded over nontribal peasants. The position of all these leading strata rested fundamentally on superior force or military prowess, on birth or kinship, and, from the standpoint of their own rank-and-file tribesmen but not necessarily of client tribes, on immemorial tribal customs.

Social stratification found, at that time as later, an ideological sanction in the Qur'ān. "We," the Qur'ān says, "have divided among them their livelihood in the present life and raised some of them above others in various degrees so that some may take others in subjection" (43:32). To this, 16:71 adds: "God gave preference to some of you over others in regard to property." The importance that the Sharī'ah or Islamic law attaches to "property" could be inferred from the fact that "property" was, as Ibn Khaldūn has pointed out,[3] one of five things – the others being "religion, life, the mind, and offspring"–whose "preservation" the Sharī'ah had enjoined as "indispensable." Stratification tended to be reinforced also by the *shar'ī* principle of *kafā'ah*, that is, equality or suitability in marriage: the husband could not, as a rule, be below the wife by birth, or occupation or fortune, so that a depression in the social standing of her father or her family could be obviated. Also relevant in the matter of stratification is the fact that the Arabs are, or at least were, a genealogy-conscious people. To the townsmen among them, in particular, a holy pedigree counted for much.

Hence the eagerness of many of their leading families to relate themselves either to the House of the Prophet or to a prominent general of the age of Arab conquests, like Khālid ibn al-Walīd, or to a renowned saint, or to some redoubtable tribe.

The long-range effects upon preexisting norms and structures of the gradual transformation of Iraq into an adjunct of the industrial capitalist system–a factor so decisive for our inquiry–and of the attendant or related facts and processes are traced in detail at several appropriate points in this work. Here they are discussed in the broadest outlines, and only from the standpoint of their influence upon the formation or emergence of classes or, more accurately, the classes under study.

The most important change in this respect was the stabilization, expansion, and, eventually, extreme concentration of private property.[4] This had much to do with the expropriation by a relatively small number of shaikhs and aghas, of the communal tribal land; the greater role of money; the rise of speculation in real estate; and the simultaneous placing of property on firmer juridical foundations, mainly through the instrumentality of the land laws of 1858 and 1932; which in turn implied the increasing consolidation and centralization of state power; and, side by side with this, the spread of communications, the growth of towns, the diffusion of European ideas and techniques, the advance in the countryside of the territorial at the expense of the kinship connection, the breakdown of the subsistence economy and self-sufficiency of the tribes, and the greater interrelatedness of the various parts of the society. Inevitably, the relations between Iraqis became less and less governed by kinship or religious standing or considerations of birth, and more and more by material possessions. Property also assumed a greater significance as a basis of social stratification and in the scale of power, though, by virtue of Iraq's status of dependence and the influence of the British upon the structural situation, it never had its full play. Of course, the elements of the traditional social structures and the attendant values and categories of understanding did not disappear, but survived, if in diluted form, alongside the new mentalities and the new structural elements and principles. In fact, often the very same group bore the imprints of the two structures in combined form. Thus the landed shaikhs and the landed *sadāh* were now partly a tradition-based or religiously ratified status group, and partly a class, and their

transformation from a status group into a class was slow and subtle; but by the fifties of this century their property had clearly become a far greater determinant of their social position than their traditional status.

One further related point bears special emphasis. In the early decades of the monarchy–in the twenties and thirties–the different elements of the socially dominant landed class–the tribal shaikhs and aghas, the tribal and urban *sadāh*, the "aristocrat"-officials, and the ex-Sharīfian officers–were vying with one another for power, prestige, and property. However, in the last two decades of the monarchy–in the forties and fifties–these same elements closed ranks, clarifying their common interests on crucial issues, that is, on such matters as the exemption of their class from taxation,[5] the virtual exclusion of the other classes from the important offices of the state,[6] and, before everything, the defense of the social order from which they all benefited. The mechanisms by which their actions were coordinated were the cabinet and the parliament, which they decisively controlled,[7] and, for a time, the Party of Constitutional Union, which was the clearest organizational expression of the vested interests of the day.[8] The catalyst to their unity was the rising danger to their social position from underprivileged groups who had become conscious of the hurtful effects on them of the existing distribution of the resources and powers of life.[9] How intense, though untutored, were the class feelings of some of these groups could be gathered from the remarks reportedly made to the one-time foreign minister of Iraq, ʻAbd-uj-Jabbār Jomard, by a non-Communist worker during the Days of March in the Mosul of 1959. "Lights are going to be put out tonight in the city," the worker told Jomard, "we are going to feel people's hands and all those who do not have rough hands are going to be butchered."

Obviously, in the twenties and thirties the upper landowners were still an embryonic class or "a class in itself" or, in the words of Max Weber, merely "a possible basis for communal action," but in the forties and fifties they turned unmistakably into "a class for itself," that is, into a distinct, politically self-conscious group.

All these points will gain greater clarity as the appropriate concrete context is brought to the foreground and as we advance in our detailed factual analysis.

For the time being, it should be evident from the foregoing observations how complex and many-sided is the class picture of Iraq and why it will be difficult, in the pages that follow, to conduct the discussion at anything more than a low level of generality.

2

OF THE DIVERSITY OF IRAQIS, THE INCOHESIVENESS OF THEIR SOCIETY, AND THEIR PROGRESS IN THE MONARCHIC PERIOD TOWARD A CONSOLIDATED POLITICAL STRUCTURE

At the turn of the century the Iraqis were not one people or one political community. This is not meant to refer simply to the presence of numerous racial and religious minorities in Iraq: Kurds, Turkomans, Persians, Assyrians, Armenians, Chaldeans, Jews, Yazīdīs, Sabeans, and others. The majority of the inhabitants of Iraq, the Arabs, though sharing common characteristics, were themselves in large measure a congeries of distinct, discordant, self-involved societies.

A wide chasm, to begin with, divided the main cities from the tribal country. Urban and tribal Arabs–except for dwellers of towns situated deep in the tribal domain or tribesmen living in the neighborhood of cities–belonged to two almost separate worlds. The links between them were primarily economic. But even in this regard their relationships could scarcely be said to have been vigorous. As late as the 1870s, in the districts that were remote from the main towns or from Shaṭṭ-al-ʻArab and the Tigris–steamers traded only on these rivers, as the Euphrates could not be navigated with ease–wheat rotted in the granaries or, as there was no other means of turning it to account, was used as fuel, while from time to time the people at Baghdād suffered from scarcity of grain. Although in subsequent decades there was an increasing but slow advance in the direction of interdependence, economic disparateness remained only too real. Segments of the tribal domain unreached by river steamers continued to be largely self-sufficient, and even had market towns of their own. Similarly, the cities had their own countryside, which nestled close to them or was within reach of their protection. Here the lands on which townsmen directly depended were cultivated by peasants who, although by origin tribesmen, were now

held together by a territorial connection. But most of the agricultural and pastoral lands of Iraq formed part of the tribal domain.

No less crucial was the social and psychological distance between the urban and tribal Arabs. In many ways they were very different from each other. The life of the urban Arabs was on the whole governed by Islamic and Ottoman laws, that of the tribal Arabs by Islamically tinged ancient tribal customs. Some of the urban Arabs, in particular the educated stratum, had come under the influence of Turkish–and in Shī'ī cities, Persian–culture; tribal Arabs, on the other hand, had escaped that influence altogether. Among urban Arabs class positions were somewhat strongly developed, among the more mobile of the tribesmen relations were still patriarchal in character. Many of the townsmen had, in the words of a nineteenth-century Iraqi historian, "become habituated to submission and servility."[1] The freer of the tribesmen were, by contrast, irrepressible. As far as they were concerned, government was a matter for contempt. As one Euphrates satirical *hawsah* or tribal chant expressed it:

> *Maldiyyah, wa mā min samm biha; taina, wa tchānat mahyūbah.*[2] It is a flabby serpent and has no venom; we have come and have seen it, it is only in times past that it kept us in awe.

Again, the Arabs of the cities were very conscious of their Moslemness; with the tribal Arabs the feeling for Islam was not as intense. I am not oblivious of the power that the Shī'ī divines had over the Shī'ī tribes of the Euphrates, but even the latter never developed the passion for religion so characteristic of urban Moslems. It is significant that, in time of tribal levées, the chants of tribesmen had usually secular–tribal or Arab–themes, such as the old Arab motif, *al-murū'ah,* manliness, whereas the masses of the city rallied more naturally to religious cries. "Ad-Dīn! Yā Muḥammad!"–"The Religion! O Muḥammad!"[3] was one of the more common slogans of the populace in Baghdād.[4] Of course, both tribal and town Arabs were conscious that they were Arabs, in particular when they were confronted, say, with a Turk or a Persian; but their Arab consciousness was in no way akin to that of the later Arab nationalists. That they were Arabs was to them a natural fact, a fact they may have taken pride in, but they did not feel at all impelled to do something about it. Theirs, in other

words, was not a dynamic Arabism, nor did the nation as such form the focus of their sentiments or of their loyalty.

The contrast that we have drawn between urban and tribal Arabs should not be overemphasized. We cannot afford to forget that many townsmen were of relatively recent tribal origin. Even today a large number of the inhabitants of Baghdād, quite apart from the tribal immigrants of the last four decades, still remember the name of the tribe to which they once belonged. A glance at the accompanying table [Table 2-1] is enough to suggest that there must have been in past centuries some sort of a recurrent turnover of the town population. One is even tempted to say, in noting the succession of plagues, famines, floods, and other disasters that afflicted Baghdād, that the city was something like a deathtrap, a "devoured' of people, and the tribal domain a replenisher a population reservoir for the city, although there were possibly also other sources for the population inflow. In fact, it would appear that in the centuries preceding ours, when the flame of the riverine cities burnt low and tribal power was rampant, there was a process of tribalization of towns. At any rate, the tribal immigrants were in a way something of a link between the two disparate societies. Once in the city, however, they naturally gave in little by little to urbanizing influences.

TABLE 2-1

The Calamities of Which We Have a Record and Which Overtook Baghdād in the 17th, 18th, and 19th Centuries

1621	Famine
1623	"Hundreds or thousands" of Sunnīs massacred and "thousands" of others sold into slavery by Persians
1633	Flood
1635	Plague
1638	General slaughter by Turks: about 30,000 victims, mostly Persians
1656	Flood
1689	Famine and plague
1733	Persian siege: "more than 100,000" died of starvation. Pestilence

1777-8	Civil war in Baghdād
1786	Flood; failure of harvest; famine; civil strife
1802-3	Plague; “most of the people of Iraq (?!)” annihilated
1822	Plague; flood
1831	Plague, flood, siege, famine. The population of Baghdād dwindled from about 80,000 to about 27,000 souls
1877-8	Plague; famine
1892	Flood
1895	Flood

Sources: Ibn Sanad al-Baṣrī al-Wā’ilī (1766-1834), *Maṭāli‘-us-Su‘ūd Biṭayyibī Akhbā*r*al-Wālī Dāūd* (“Fortune’s Preludes to the Happy Annals of the Governor Dāūd”) as abridged in 1873 by Amīn b. Ḥasan al-Ḥalwānī al-Madanī (Cairo, 1951), pp. 39 and 87; Anthony N. Groves, *Journal of a Residence at Baghdād during the Years 1830 and 1831* (London, 1832), pp. 114, 135, and 236; S. H. Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq* (Oxford, 1925), pp. 53, 57, 68, 73-74, 93, 143, 184-185, 203, 212, and 265; and Aḥmad Sūsah, *Aṭlas Baghdād* (“Atlas of Baghdād”) (Baghdad, 1952), pp. 31-32.

The social division did not exist only between the cities and the tribal domain. The tribal domain itself was in fragments. The old tribal confederations had broken up. Baghdād Wilāyah[5] alone had 110 tribes,[6] and although these tribes observed similar rules and had similar institutions, their relationships were in no little degree dominated by raids or forays. The tribes were also divided into *filiḥ*, peasants; *ma‘dān*, Marshdwellers; *shāwiyah*, People of the Sheep; and *ahl-il-ibl*, People of the Camel. The latter formed, in effect, the tribal aristocracy. They haughtily disdained all the other tribes and would not fraternize or intermarry with them.[7] Similarly, the spirited Euphrates tribesmen, who lived in intimate contiguity with the great ancestral deserts, scorned the more submissive and more quiescent tribesmen of the lower Tigris. “Iraqi tribesmen are of two groups,” was later to affirm a well-known Euphrates shaikh,

> to the first group belong those who have to this day retained all the lofty qualities that distinguished their forefathers . . . such as the love

> of liberty, the readiness to sacrifice for it, the loathing of injustice, self-respect and self-denial, and a bold and zealous spirit . . . . They are the tribesmen that live on the Euphrates and north of Baghdād. The second group are Arabs by race but, in view of their contact with the successive Arab and non-Arab governments of past centuries, their frequenting of cities, and their mingling with the riff-raff, have lost some of their Arab qualities and forgotten or feigned forgetfulness of their ancient dignity and noble customs . . . . They are the tribesmen that settled in some of the districts of the Tigris to the south of Baghdād.[8]

When we turn to the cities we find that the physical bonds between them were loose and tenuous. Apart from a faltering telegraphic service and iron steamers on irregular Tigris sailings, communications were primitive and uncertain. The journey from Baghdād to Baṣrah took a week, and traveling was in itself an adventure. Partly as a consequence of this, the cities differed in their economic orientation. The ties of Mosul were with Syria and Turkey, and those of Baghdād and the Shī‘ī holy cities with Persia and the western and southwestern deserts. Baṣrah looked mainly to the sea and to India. The different schemes of weights and measures in the different towns of Iraq,[9] the wide variation in the prices of the same commodity by reason of the dissimilar marketing conditions,[10] and the extensive use of different currencies[11] attested to the latent economic disunity. All this tended to favor the growth of a strong spirit of localism. A Mosulite relates in his memoirs how, when in 1909 he was appointed by a governor of the new Young Turk government[12] to a judgeship in Baṣrah, a large number of its dignitaries signed a petition objecting to his appointment on the grounds that he was "neither a Baṣrite nor of the *ashrāf*[13] or *mallāks*[14] of Baṣrah." [15]

Of course, the more conscious of the townsmen thought of themselves as part of the realm of Islam, and Islam's ideals, though denuded of much of their old vigor, tended to rescue them to some extent from their localism and associate them with their brother Moslems within and beyond the confines of the Ottoman Empire. But Islam in Iraq was more a force of division than of integration. It split deeply Shī‘ī and Sunnī Arabs. Socially they seldom mixed, and as a rule did not intermarry. In mixed cities they

lived in separate quarters and led their own separate lives. To the strict Shī‘īs, the government of the day–the government of the Ottoman sultan that led Sunnī Islam–was, in its essence, a usurpation. In their eyes, it had not the qualification to even execute the laws of Islam. They were, therefore, estranged from it, few caring to serve it or to attend its schools.

The Shī‘ī-Sunnī division assumed a more acute form when it coincided with another type of social division: the class division. The interconnection between the sectarian and class cleavages is discussed elsewhere at some length.[16] Here it suffices to refer to its aggravating effect upon the feeling between the two sects and to add, by way of parenthesis, that the presence of this factor suggests that their mutual estrangement, if expressed religiously, had its roots, at least partly, in economic and social causes.

All the urban cleavages found an expression in one other phenomenon: that of the *maḥallah* or city quarter. In the towns of Iraq, in other words, the groups that belonged to different faiths, sects, or classes or that were of different ethnic or tribal origin tended to live in separate *maḥallahs*. For example, on Baghdād's main bank–the eastern bank–the Shī‘īs lived in ad-Dahhānah, Ṣabābīgh-il-Āl, al-Qushal,[17] Sūq-il-‘Aṭṭarīn, and other quarters; the Jews mostly in at-Tawrāt, Taḥt-it-Takyah, Abū Saifain, and Sūq Hannūrī; the Christians in ‘Aqd-in-Naṣārah and Ra's-il-Qaryah.[18] Much of the rest of the eastern side of the city was Sunnī, but subdivided on other lines. Thus al-Maydān was inhabited by the Turkish military, al-Haydarkhānah by "aristocratic" families and upper officials, Dukkān Shnāwah by lower officials, inner Bāb-ish-Shaikh by artisans,[19] and Bāb-ish-Shaikh's outer fringes by Baghdādī army officers of humble origins, and other elements. The large stratum of *kasabah*[20] also lived in Bāb-ish-Shaikh and Dukkān Shnāwah, as well as elsewhere.[21] The same phenomenon characterized Baghdād's suburbs: al-Kādhimiyyah, which contains the tombs of the seventh and ninth of the Shī‘ī Imāms,[22] was exclusively Shī‘ī and had a large concentration of Persians, while al-A‘ḍhamiyyah, which owes its origin to the tomb of Abū Ḥanīfah, a leading Sunnī legist and theologian of the eighth century, and which symbolically lies on the opposite shore of the Tigris, was exclusively Sunnī and inhabited for the most part by descendants of the Arab tribe of ‘Ubaid.[23]

The members of each of the different crafts into which the artisans were divided, who were organized somewhat loosely in guilds or *aṣnāf*, tended

also to reside together in single streets, and in some towns would appear to have been originally an extension of one and the same or of a few family groupings.[24]

As a rule, the inhabitants of the *maḥallah* existed in a world of their own. Except for a very small number of educated people, they were pretty much absorbed in the narrowness of their life, and seldom if ever took thought of the community at large or of its interests, or had even any real understanding of the concept of such a community. Moreover, those forming part of a *millah*,[25] as the Christians and the Jews, enjoyed autonomy in their personal and denominational affairs.

There is no lack of evidence in our sources of the strength of the *maḥallah* mentality at that time. When, for example, in April 1915 the people of Najaf rose against the Turks and expelled them from the city, each of Najaf's four quarters became independent, and continued to enjoy that status till the coming of the English in August 1917.[26] The constitution of one of the quarters, that of Burāq, has been preserved. In view of its significance and its reflection of the level of contemporary political thinking of some of the Iraqi townsmen, it is worthwhile reproducing a number of its paragraphs (the reader will also note how the social organization of the quarter in this city was still largely based on the tribe, which bears out the point previously made concerning the process of tribalization of towns; but at the same time it must be remembered that Najaf had closer relations with the tribal domain than with the main cities):

The 1915 Constitution of the Burāq Quarter of Najaf

> In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate, and whose help we seek.
>
> We write this document in order to secure unity and cohesion amongst ourselves, we the inhabitants of Burāq quarter, and our names are at the end of this document.
>
> We have assembled ourselves and become united and of one blood, and follow one another should anything happen to our quarter from

other quarters. We will rise together against an outsider who is not from us, whether the result be to our advantage or to our disadvantage, and the conditions of our union are as follows: –

(1) If an outsider is killed, the murderer has to pay 5 līras [about £5 sterling] and the remainder of the blood money is to be paid by the whole tribe.

(2) If anybody from our union is killed, half of the *faṣl*[27] is for the murdered man's family and half for the union.

(3) If anyone kills anybody from his own tribe and the tribe has no responsible head, the murderer must leave the place for seven years and anybody who aids him is also to be dismissed for the same period. The *faṣl* is 30 liras in gold. . . . One-third is to be given to the union and two-thirds to the relatives . . . .

. . .

(7) Should harm befall one of us who steals, robs, loots, or fornicates, we are not only not responsible but also not his friends.

(8) If any one of us is arrested for our doings by the government, or imprisoned, all his expenses will be paid by us.

The above is for all of us. We are united with Kāḍhim,[28] whether he is in the town or not, and on this condition we all put our signatures . . . and God is our witness.[29]

The tendency to split into independent *maḥallas* was by no means a peculiarity of Najaf. During World War I, the eastern quarter of the small Euphrates town of Samāwah sided with the British, while the western quarter preserved an overt neutrality.[30] The two quarters under their own autonomous shaikhs had been waging continual war against each other for the preceding twenty years.[31] At Mosul "feeling between the different wards," observed a British vice consul in 1909, "is often strong and bitter and not infrequently gives rise to quarrels. . . . Barricades are erected and the arms used are clubs, maces, revolvers, knives, and stones. Only one such engagement took place last year, one man being killed and several wounded."[32] Even in Baghdād the loyalty to the *maḥallah* was apt to assert itself in vigorous terms. From an account we have of a demonstration that took place in October 1911, and that was seemingly organized by the

Turkish authorities to protest Italy's invasion of Tripoli, it appears that the people were grouped by *maḥallas*, and that a vehement scuffle occurred between the delegation of the quarter of Bāb-ish-Shaikh and that of Ḥaydarkhānah over the questions of precedence and who should march at the head of the demonstration.[33]

Thus far we have regarded the various loyalties in the Iraq of pre-World War I as if they were simply negative and divisive. In fact, from the standpoint of the individual involved in them, and insofar as they had not petrified or been drained of their substance, they fulfilled a positive need. The tribes, the *maḥallas*, and the *aṣnāf* were partly an expression of the innate impulse for protection through unity–a protection that the Ottoman government, by reason of its weakness, could not regularly provide. "To depend on the tribe," wrote in 1910 one of Baghdād's deputies to the Ottoman parliament, "is a thousand times safer than depending on the government, for whereas the latter defers or neglects repression, the tribe, no matter how feeble it may be, as soon as it learns that an injustice has been committed against one of its members readies itself to exact vengeance on his behalf."[34] That the *maḥallah* served a similar function is reflected in the already cited Constitution of the Burāq quarter of Najaf. The *aṣnāf* were also in a sense organizations for mutual support. One of their duties, as expressed in regulations dating from 1910, was to render assistance to those of their members who were "ill or in want."[35] The links within the tribes were particularly intimate, and helped to cultivate strong and exclusive sentiments. The individual belonging to them knew he was not alone and, having an anchor on which to lean in misfortune, seldom experienced the gloom of helplessness.

We may now once again profitably change our point of view. The various loyalties, of which we have spoken, have been hitherto treated by us largely as if they were in a static condition. As a matter of fact, they were already involved to a greater or lesser degree in a process of erosion, especially at Baghdād and its environs, at Baṣrah, and in the tribal regions of Shaṭṭ-il-'Arab and the lower Tigris. This was the cumulative effect of the introduction of river steam navigation (1859), the appearance of the electric telegraph (1861), the attendant deepening of English economic penetration and tying of Iraq to the world of capitalism, the opening of state schools (since 1869), the development of the press (especially after 1908), and the

repeated attempts by the Turkish governing authority between 1831 and 1914 to gather all the means of power into its hands, break the cohesion of the tribes, and Ottomanize the town population.

The ensuing penetration of money and of the idea of profit among some of the tribes, the passing of these tribes from a subsistence to a market-oriented economy, the transformation of their shaikhs from patriarchs into gain-seeking landlords, the Turkish policy of playing off tribal chief against tribal chief, the vying of the bigger of these chiefs against each other for peasants, and the consequent intermixture of tribesmen so changed the conditions of life in the affected regions as to attenuate the old tribal loyalties or render them by and large ineffectual.[36]

In the cities and towns the inflow of English goods affected adversely what had survived of the old crafts, in particular the weaving of cloths,[37] and thereby weakened the attachment to the *aṣnāf*. In Baghdād itself, however, much of the industrial decline must more appropriately be connected to the ravages of the plague and flood of 1831.

One further byproduct of the new processes was the coming into being of a new but as yet diminutive social force: the new intelligentsia, which in effect meant the birth of a new loyalty-nationalism.

Nationalism did not displace the old loyalties. Although it grew at their expense, it existed side by side with them, corroding them, yes, but at the same time absorbing some of their psychological elements and expressing itself within the emotional and conceptual patterns of the Islamic religion.

Many facts and influences assisted, directly or indirectly, the diffusion of the new national feeling: among others, the rise in the number of young Iraqis attending Turkish schools of higher learning, mainly the Military Academy at Isṭanbūl; the increasing exposure to European modes of thought; the growth of pan-Turkism, the heightened tempo of Ottomanization, and the relative insensitiveness of the Turks to local needs; the spread of books and newspapers; the more frequent inter-Arab contacts and the emergence of pan-Arab clubs and societies; the greater interest in Arab history and in the achievements of the past and the sensing of the poverty and dreariness of present conditions; and, of course, the pull of the common language and common ethnic origin of the majority of Iraqis. But what more than anything else helped the progress of the new sentiment was the English invasion of 1914-1918, or rather the resistance that it stirred and

that reached its climactic point in the armed uprising of 1920. For the first time in many centuries, Shī‘īs joined politically with Sunnīs, and townsmen from Baghdād and tribesmen from the Euphrates made common cause. Unprecedented joint Shī‘ī-Sunnī celebrations, ostensibly religious but in reality political, were held in all the Shī‘ī and Sunnī mosques in turn: special *mawlids*, Sunnī ceremonial observances in honor of the Prophet's birthday, were on occasions followed by *ta'ziyahs*, Shī‘ī lamentations for the martyred Husain,[38] the proceedings culminating in patriotic oratory and poetic thundering against the English.[39] The armed outbreak that this agitation precipitated could not be said to have been truly nationalist either in its temper or its hopes. It was essentially a tribal affair, and animated by a multitude of local passions and interests, but it became part of nationalist mythology and thus an important factor in the spread of national consciousness. Indeed, it would not be going too far to say that with the events of 1919-1920, and more particularly with the bond, however tender, that was created between Sunnīs and Shī‘īs, a new process set in: the painful, now gradual, now spasmodic growth of an Iraqi national community.

Under the monarchy, which was established in 1921, it became by degrees clear that the advance of this process was not only contingent upon the integration of the Shī‘īs into the body politic or the firm fastening of Shī‘īs and Sunnīs to one another, the voluntary unifying of their wills–even their intermarrying–but also upon the successful resolution of another historic conflict which lay at the very basis of many of the divisions bedeviling Iraqi society: the twofold conflict between the tribes and the riverine cities, and among the tribes themselves over the food-producing flatlands of the Tigris and Euphrates.

Much of the premonarchic history of the country could be understood in terms of this conflict. In a sense, the life principles of the cities and tribes in Iraq's river valleys were mutually contradictory. To be more concrete, the existence of powerful tribes was, as a rule, a concomitance of weak cities. Inversely, the growth of the cities involved the decline of the tribes. Thus in the period between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries, which witnessed the eclipse of the ‘Abbāsid Caliphate; the depredations of the Il-Khānid Mongols; the well-nigh utter ruin of the ancient dikes; the invasions of the Jaylars, Black Sheep, and White Sheep Turkoimans, Timūrid Mongols,

Ṣafawids, and Ottomans; and the protracted but intermittent Turkish-Persian wars, one paramount fact recurrently asserted itself: the enfeeblement of the towns. The inevitable accompaniment of this was the advance of tribal power. But the new life and new ideas infused into Iraq in the second half of the nineteenth century–by dint of the new communications and the new links with the capitalist world, and through other factors already referred to–reversed the historical trend, leading to the recovery of the towns and the beginning of the decomposition of the tribal order.

In this conflict the reforming Ottoman sultans of the nineteenth century and the Young Turks, whom the 1908 Revolution raised to political ascendancy, could be said to have championed, in ways peculiar to them, the cause of the towns. The English, on the other hand, anxious as they were to avoid the costly maintenance of a large force of occupation, saw in the balancing of tribesmen against townsmen the surest guarantee of the continuance of their own power. They attempted not only to arrest the incipient process of detribalization, or vindicate the authority of the tribal chiefs, or keep at a minimum the interaction between townsmen and tribesmen, but also to solidify the existing cleavage by the consolidation and official recognition of tribal customs. The Tribal Disputes Regulations, issued by the English on July 27, 1918, as a proclamation having the force of law and, on English insistence, made law of the land in the monarchic period under Articles 113 and 114 of the Iraqi Constitution of 1925, excluded the countryside from the purview of the national law. Down to the July 1958 Revolution, Iraq would thus remain legally subject to two norms–one for the cities and one for the tribal countryside.

At the same time, the contributions of the English in the form of ideas or skills in the fields of administration, irrigation, agriculture, and other areas of life, though incidental to their pursuit of basic imperial interests, no doubt helped the progress of the Iraqis toward a viable state. In the twenties the presence of the English may have also been decisive in keeping Iraq in one piece. If the R.A.F. and the British alliance were to be withdrawn, wrote in that decade the British High Commissioner Henry Dobbs, “the Government of Iraq would, I believe, in a few months, either vanish altogether or remain clinging desperately to a strip of territory along the Tigris between Sāmarrā’ and Kūt, the whole of the rest of the country

falling away."[40] As the monarchy was as yet a delicate reed, its army deficient in strength, and the tribal domain "crammed with arms," it is difficult not to agree with Dobbs. On the other hand, the English did their best–the Iraqi nationalists complained–to overlook the needs of the royal army and to delay as long as possible the introduction of conscription which, in contrast to the principle of voluntary service then in force, would have, it was presumed, strengthened the monarchy militarily, and simultaneously reduced its financial burden.

Though a creation of the English, the Hashemite monarchy was, in the first two decades of its life, animated by a spirit inherently antithetical to theirs. Owing to the initial intimate interweaving of its dynastic interests with the fortunes of the pan-Arab movement, its basic instinct in the period 1921-1939 was to further–to the extent that its status of dependence permitted–the work of nation building in Iraq. With this in mind, but also in order to meet its administrative needs, it added greatly to the existing educational facilities,[41] thereby ultimately adding to the ranks of the new middle-class intelligentsia, the natural carrier of national sentiment. Consistently enough, the monarchy took pains in those years to nurture in the schools the passion of patriotism and a lively sympathy for the pan-Arab ideal. However, in the time of Faiṣal I (1921-1933), the chief accent of royal policy was on the urgent and yet exceedingly difficult task of cultivating among Iraq's diverse elements enduring ties of common feeling and common purpose. "In Iraq," Faiṣal maintained in a confidential memorandum,

> there is still–and I say this with a heart full of sorrow–no Iraqi people but unimaginable masses of human beings, devoid of any patriotic idea, imbued with religious traditions and absurdities, connected by no common tie, giving ear to evil, prone to anarchy, and perpetually ready to rise against any government whatever. Out of these masses we want to fashion a people which we would train, educate, and refine. . . . The circumstances, being what they are, the immenseness of the efforts needed for this [can be imagined].[42]

Realizing how much depended on the conciliation of the Shī'īs, and clearly troubled by the half-truth that "the taxes are on the Shī'ī death is on the

Shī‘ī, and the posts are for the Sunnī”–which he heard “thousands of times”-Faiṣal went out of his way to associate the Shī‘īs with the new state and to ease their admission into the government service; among other things, he put promising young members of this sect through an accelerated program of training, and afforded them the chance to rise rapidly to positions of responsibility.[43] He also saw to it that the Kurds received an appropriate quota of public appointments. At the same time he felt that there could be no solid progress toward genuine statehood without the strengthening of the army. As the government was “far and away weaker than the people”–there were in 1933 in the country at large “more than 100,000 rifles whereas the government possesses only 15,000”[44]–Faiṣal had doubts whether he could cope with two simultaneous armed outbreaks in widely separated regions.[45] It would be “foolish,” he thought, to carry out important reforms or development projects without the assurance of an adequate protective force. For all these reasons he regarded the army as “the spinal column for nation-forming.”[46] Accordingly, in 1933, the year in which Iraq gained undivided control over its internal affairs, Faiṣal raised the strength of the military establishment to 11,500 men[47] from the total of 7,500 at which it had remained fixed since 1925.[48]

In his efforts to refashion Iraq on national foundations, Faiṣal I proceeded with care and, keeping his eyes fastened not on what was purely desirable but on what could in practice be achieved, he avoided any step suggestive of adventurism. Of course, in this as in other relevant lines of policy, he was not actuated by sheer devotion to the interests of his people, for he was laying the base for the power of his own family, even as he was laying the base for a compact state.

Although under the young and inexperienced Ghāzī (1933-1939) the country fell a prey to tribal rebellions and military coups, and the personal influence of the monarch palpably declined, there was nevertheless no essential deviation from the prior trend of royal policy. Except during a brief period in 1936-1937, the pan-Arab character of the state became more pronounced. The army rose in strength to 800 officers and 19,500 men by 1936,[49] and to 1,426 officers and 26,345 men by 1939.[50] There had been few Iraqi officer pilots in 1933, but in 1936 they numbered 37 and were expected to add up to 127 at the end of the following year.[51] More than that, the standard-gauge line from Baghdād to Baijī, which was meant to form

part of the strategic Berlin-Baghdād railway, but was left unfinished at the end of World War I, was now extended to Tall Kochek on the Syrian frontier,[52] which made possible a continuous haul from Mosul to the Gulf, and signified not only the advance of central state control but also progress toward the transformation of Iraq into a rationally organized economic unit. Over and above this, the elements that had stood nearest to Faiṣal I–the principal ex-Sharīfian officers[53]–and that had been fighting tooth and nail for an army based on conscription, gained their end in 1934, and thus facilitated the eventual turning of the military forces into an effective means for the intermingling of tribesmen with townsmen and the breaking down of the hard and fast line between the tribes–a necessary precondition for their integration in national life.

In brief, through the whole period of 1921-1939 the monarch, centered at Baghdād, had in effect a social meaning diametrically opposed to that of the tribal shaikhs, the then still virtual rulers of much of the countryside. The shaikh represented the principle of the fragmented or multiple community (many tribes), the monarch the ideal of an integral community (one Iraqi people, one Arab nation). Or to express the relationship differently, the shaikh was the defender of the divisive tribal *ʻurf* (tradition), the monarch the exponent of the unifying national law. In view of the presence of large non-Arab minorities in the country, there was, to be sure, some inherent contradiction between the ideal of one Iraqi people and that of one Arab nation, but the element of contradiction was mitigated by the fact that the aim of pan-Arab unity–as distinct from inter-Arab cooperation–was at no time actively pursued.

The social meaning of the monarchy changed in the time of Prince ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh, who ruled as regent during the minority of his nephew, Faiṣal II, that is, from 1939 to 1953, and after the coming of age and crowning of the young king, clung tenaciously to the reins of government until his destruction at the hands of the revolutionaries of 1958.

The change had its genesis in the period 1936-1941. In those years the principal ex-Sharīfian officers–Nūrī as-Saʻīd, the archpolitician-to-be of the monarchy, among others–saw wielded against them the weapon–the army–that they had helped to forge, and which had constituted the very anchor of royal policy. In a sense, the series of military coups in which they got enmeshed was a rebounding upon them of their own attempts to use the

army for factious ends.[54] In another sense, the coups represented a successful, even if shortlived, break by the armed segment of the middle class[55] into the narrow circle of the ruling order: power had been before 1936 pretty much the preserve of the English, the king, the principal ex-Sharīfian officers,[56] and the upper stratum of the propertied classes. From this it should not be inferred that the coups were, narrowly speaking, class actions, or that in the instance of each and every officer who was involved in the coups there was a direct or conscious connection between his social origin and his political behavior. Of course, the coups were carried out on the initiative of a small number of individuals, and could partly be explained by the personal motives of the leading officers, or the intrigues of ambitious politicians, or the lure or example of the neighboring militarist regimes–those of Iran and Turkey–but the coups succeeded, if briefly, because they appealed to sentiments or manifested tendencies–reformism, or pan-Arabism, or neutralism, or intense opposition to English influence, or sheer discontent at the exclusion of all but a few from any effective role in the political life of the country–sentiments and tendencies that were shared by substantial portions of the officer corps and of the middle class from which the corps largely stemmed.

The coups were also very instructive. For one thing, their recurrence laid bare that the officer corps was afflicted with divisions. Quite apart from the self-seeking coteries that a politicized army tends to engender, three fundamental elements became distinguishable, one Kurdish, one pan-Arab, and one strictly Iraqi: the 1936 coup was led by Kurds and Iraqists; in the countercoups of 1937 and 1938 and in the movement of 1941 the critical role was played by pan-Arabs. The superior weight of the pan-Arab trend was the consequence, partly, of the monarchy's own initial pan-Arab predilection and, partly, of the fact that a very large number of the younger officers hailed from the northern Arab provinces, which leaned strongly toward pan-Arabism, inasmuch as they had been economically linked with Syria and Palestine before World War I and now still suffered from the partition of the Arab areas of the Ottoman Empire and the obstacles of the new frontiers.

Moreover, it became apparent from the coups how tenuous were the threads that held the life of the monarchy and how easily they could be snapped. Amongst the papers said to have been left behind by General Bakr

Ṣidqī, the chief figure in the 1936 overturn, was a project for the forming of a dictatorship and the putting away of the king.[57] The leaders of the 1941 movement, for their part, did not hesitate to depose ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh when, rather than accept the independent course that they were steering, he identified himself with the English in World War II and, seeing the peril of his situation, made his escape to their base at Ḥabbāniyyah, and eventually to his uncle's feud in Transjordan.

But, from the perspective of broad political trends, the most significant thing about the whole interlude of military coups was its climactic and closing sequence of events: the Thirty-Day War of 1941, the use by the English of Transjordan's Arab Legion against the Iraqis, and their reimposition of ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh as regent by force of arms.

Time never effaced from the hearts of Iraqis the remembrance that in their hour of danger the Hashemite house stood on the side of their enemies. The War of 1941 was a great spur to their national feeling. They had not been of one mind about the intervention of the army in state affairs or the political tendencies of the leading officers, but when the war came, they quickly forgot their differences, save for a minority. In Baghdād and the other towns the sentiments of Shīʻī and Sunnī and Arab and Kurd merged for the moment and while the fighting lasted. Among men in humble life, in particular, such an accord of spirits reigned as had not been witnessed since the uprising of 1920. In this atmosphere ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh's every act appeared as a betrayal. At any rate, from this point onward nationalists and Hashemites moved on different planes of thought and feeling. The monarchy lost its nationalist physiognomy, and the nationalists became at heart antimonarchic.

In the years that followed, the entire orientation of royal policy changed. In the first place, the army, which had been the primary concern of the monarchy, and which by 1941 had risen to 1,745 officers and 44,217 men,[58] was in large measure broken up. In the year 1941/42 alone, 324 officers were pensioned off,[59] and by 1948, 1,095 other officers had been discharged from service before reaching retirement age.[60] The army as a whole was left in a lamentable state. In the words of British Colonel Gerald de Gaury:

> Its boots were [at the end of the Second World War] mostly unfit for wear in marching, its supply of clothes short, its leave long overdue, its

> pay meagre, and its rations had been reduced to a figure a thousand calories below the minimum considered necessary by European medical men for Eastern troops. Money for repair of barracks and camps had been stopped. The Police were forbidden to assist in tracing or arresting deserters and by the summer of 1943, out of an established strength of thirty thousand men, twenty thousand were deserters.[61]

Though restlessness in Kurdistan necessitated a partial retreat in 1944 from this injurious and vindictive course of conduct, the army was still in bad shape when four years later it had to fight a war in Palestine.[62] Ill-prepared, poorly led, inappropriately armed, suffering from an insufficiency of skilled personnel, and kept in short supply by the English as a matter of policy, it was unable to fulfill its task. Defeat gave a stimulus to changes in the direction of greater efficiency. But the monarchy's distrust of the military did not subside. Only once–in 1952–and after much hesitation did it venture to use the army as a repressive force inside Baghdād. Otherwise, it kept the striking units unammunitioned and far from the capital. However, after the capture of power by the army in Syria in 1949 and in Egypt in 1952, the government took pains to bind the military element to the throne by ties of material interest. Conditions of service for officers were ameliorated,[63] and various benefits–clothing and housing allowances, liberal pensions, and grants of land, among other things–were conferred upon them. But the rift dividing them from the Hashemites had grown too wide. Few, indeed, would be on the side of the royal family at the hour of its fall.

The failure to win back the loyalty of the officer corps was related to another aspect of the post-1941 monarchial policy. Alienated from the nationalists, the Crown had been tying its fortunes more and more intimately to those of the English and the tribal shaikhs, and thus had developed a living interest in the continuance not only of the English connection but also of the tribal order. Into this alliance the Crown had been driven further by a series of fierce urban mass uprisings–the *Wathbah* of 1948[64] and the *Intifāḍas* of 1952[65] and 1956[66]–and by the related drift toward the Left, in the towns, of large portions of the middle and laboring classes. The daily lives of these people had been deeply affected by the trend of rising prices and scarcity of supplies induced by World War II, by the inflationary currents let loose by the oil boom of the fifties, and by the

large-scale movement of peasants into the capital caused by the attractions of city life, the weak connection with the land of the once nomadic agricultural tribesmen, the oppressiveness of the shaikhly system, and the drying up of river branches in the lower Tigris due to the rapid pump development in the provinces of Kūt and Baghdād.[67]

The alliance with the English found ultimate expression in the Baghdād Pact of 1955, a commitment which, being out of accord with the general sentiment of the country and of other Arab lands, and prefaced by relentless proceedings against every movement of opposition or liberty of speech,[68] added in no little degree to the antipopular and antinational character of the monarchy.

The tie-up with the shaikhs, symbolized by the marriage in 1953 of Prince ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh to Hiyām, daughter of Muḥammad al-Ḥabīb al-Amīr, chief of the tribe of Rabīʻah, was reflected in the solicitude shown in the last seventeen years of the monarchy for the interests of the shaikhs, and in particular in the intensification of the practice of applying the land settlement laws in their favor. Vast expanses of customary tribal land and of the best state land were by this means allowed to pass into their exclusive possession. By thus increasing their essentially nonproductive grasp over agriculture, and at the same time keeping their villages barren of governmental controls, the monarchy enabled them to weigh more and more heavily on a peasantry now reduced in many regions to a status akin to serfdom. The shaikhs became an economic incubus and began to symbolize the extreme economic inequality that was by this time hindering, even more than tribalism–itself undermined by this very inequality–the integration of the community and the inclusion of the peasants within the purview of national life.

In other words, by its alliance with the shaikhs, the monarchy ceased, in effect, to play a unifying social role. Moreover, by its commitment to a rural social structure, which condemned the majority of the inhabitants of the country to depressed conditions and which, therefore, constituted a serious impediment to the progress of the Iraqi economy as a whole, the monarchy itself became, in a crucial sense, a retarding social factor.

On the other hand, by choice, or on account of pressures from below; or in the process of meeting security needs, or attending to urgent problems, or fulfilling the expectations of favored interests, or vying with the ascendant

Nāṣirite wave in neighboring countries; or through involvement in the consequences of the economy's slow progress from subsistence to market conditions, or in other chains of events previously set in motion or externally activated, the monarchy added to the material factors making for a consolidated and more powerful state.

For one thing, the mileage of gravel or hard surfaced roads increased from probably about 500 in 1944[69] to about 1600 in 1955.[70] These roads were mostly to be found in the middle and northern parts of the country. They struck outwards from Baghdād and such centers as Mosul and Kirkūk. The south continued to be connected, by and large, by earthen roads that were exposed to churning and rutting after flood or rain. The areas of agricultural production also remained on the whole unlinked by feeder roads to the main road system.

For another thing, the administrative machine and security apparatus of the state grew larger. Government officials, excluding the employees of the port and the railways, numbered only 3,143 in 1920, but 9,740 in 1938, and 20,031 in 1958.[71] The officers and technical staff of the railways added up to 1,639 in 1927, 1,738 in 1937, and 3,872 in 1957.[72] Similarly, policemen increased from 2,470 in 1920 to 12,266 in 1941, and 23,383 in 1958.[73] The last figure included the 8,368 officers and men of the Mobile Force, which now served as the chief repressive instrument of the monarchy.

Again, to safeguard Baghdād and the south of Iraq against devastating floods and to provide a more regular supply of water for irrigation, dams and barrages were erected in the fifties on the Diyālah, the Lesser Zāb, the upper Euphrates near Ramādī, and the upper Tigris near Sāmarrā'. Obviously, the benefit from the control of the environment was general, but these undertakings also afforded expectation of greater incomes for the already advantaged shaikhs and the other strata of the landed class. At the same time, the strengthening of the state's command of the rivers and the expansion of its potentially cultivable land increased, to a significant degree, its ability to enforce its will.

The building of dams and reservoirs had been made possible by an unprecedented flow of money into the country's treasury. Moved initially by the desire to punish Iran for its nationalization law of 1951, and afterwards by the hope of buttressing Iraq's monarchic regime, the oil companies had sharply stepped up production. The receipts of the state

from oil rose from £1.5 million in 1941 to £5.2 million in 1950, £58.3 million in 1953, and £79.8 million in 1958.[74] This outpouring of capital, which had also been spurred by better terms of oil payments, greatly added to the financial power of the state. In consequence, and by reason of the special character of the oil companies–their foreign ownership, their extraneousness to the local economy, and their employment of only a tiny segment of the working population–the state became in large measure economically autonomous from society–which, as could be imagined, heightened its potential for despotism. Simultaneously, the overflow of royalties made the state, from the economic standpoint, dangerously dependent upon the oil companies: in 1954 its receipts from oil formed 65.7 percent and in 1958 61.7 percent of its total revenue.[75]

The growth of the material power of the state did not in the end help the monarchy. Its moral divorce from the mass of the politically conscious strata of the people was fatal. It could no longer be sure of the loyalty of the very elements–the officials, the army, and even the police–through whom it exercised its will upon the country.

Ironically, the monarchy continued to add to the ranks of the stratum that had become most hostile to its existence, that is, to the ranks of the educated and semieducated class. It had really little choice. The process of expansion of the school system, begun in the twenties, could not be reversed. No little prestige had come to be attached in the society to the earning, particularly, of a university degree. Once some Iraqis had received higher training, others, in ever larger numbers, pressed for similar opportunities. The government could not now plead lack of funds. The needs of a moving society had also to be met. Anyhow, the number of state college students increased from 99 in 1921/22 to 1,218 in 1940/41 and 8,568 in 1958/59, and the number of state secondary school students from 229 to 13,969 and 73,911 in the same years.[76] Elementary education made similar progress. On the other hand, qualitatively the advance on all levels was not as impressive. Moreover, in 1958 more than six-sevenths of the population was still illiterate. One other factor has to be emphasized: the monarchy, by differentiating more and more Iraqis from the unlettered mass, was giving them a middle-class status without, however, assuring them of a middle-class income. Here lay one of the sources of the agitation

that was a recurrent feature of the cities and towns in the last decade of the monarchy.

Evidently, the continued enlargement of the educated class involved the continued erosion of traditional loyalties, but now not necessarily the continued growth of nationalist sentiments. This is because of the rise, as has already been intimated, of new ideological currents, and in particular of communism.

No less erosive of old loyalties and productive of new ties was another process that was at work in the period of the monarchy: the rapid advance of urban life. According to official census records (see Table 2-2), the population of Greater Baghdād, roughly estimated at about 200,000 in 1922, rose to 515,459 in 1947, and 793,183 in 1957. Baṣrah underwent, it would appear, similar demographic changes, but the rate of increase for Mosul was clearly lower. The counts made by the government may or may not have been thorough or competently carried out, but the rapid growth of the population in the capital and at Iraq's seaport is undoubted and, as noted elsewhere, largely explicable by unprecedented migrations of peasant-tribesmen from the countryside. These great internal movements produced, to be sure, tensions, conflicts, and unbalances, but simultaneously brought more and more Iraqis into closer association with each other.

TABLE 2-2

Population of Baghdād, Mosul, and Baṣrah (1908-1977)

Year	Baghdād[a]	Percent increase	Mosul	Percent increase	Baṣrah	Percent increase
1908[b]	150,000					
1922[c]	200,000		70,000		55,000	
1935[d]	350,000		100,000		60,000	
1947[e]	515,459		133,625		101,535	
1957[f]	793,183	53.9	178,222	33.4	164,905	62.4
1965[g]	1,490,756	87.9	264,146	48.2	310,950	88.6
1977[h]	2,600,000		450,000		550,000	

[a]Within limits of the jurisdiction of the mayor of the capital.

Sources:

[b]Estimate by Ḥabīb K. Chīna, *La Province de Bagdād* (1908), p. 165.

[c]Official estimate, *Al-'Iraq Year Book (1922)*, p. 44.

[d]Estimate, *Dalīl-ul-Mamlakat-il-'Irāqiyyah Lisanat 1935-1936* ("Directory of the Iraqi Kingdom for the Year 1935-1936"), p. 97.

[e]Official 1947 Census. Figures supplied to this writer by Dr. Fūād Massī of the Directorate General of Census.

[f]Official 1957 Census, Iraq, Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Census, *Al-Majmū'at'ul-'Iḥṣaiyyah Litasjīl 'Ām 1957* ("Statistical Compilation Relating to the Census of 1957") *Provinces of Baghdād and Ramādī* (in Arabic), p. 168; *Provinces of 'Amārah and Baṣrah*, p. 112; and *Provinces of Mosul and Arbīl*, p. 167.

[g]Official 1965 General Census, Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1969*, pp. 44, 52, and 59.

[h]Rough estimate.

Innumerable tangible and intangible ties were also woven among them by the development of communications, including automatic telephone exchanges at Baghdād and Baṣrah, a powerful wireless transmitting station at Abū Ghrayb, and a modern television station in the capital, not to mention the "voices" broadcasting from abroad.

From all the foregoing, it should be clear that in the period 1921-1958 the monarchy, by choice or from necessity, directly or indirectly, through processes it initiated or through processes in which it became entangled, partly hindered the cohesion of Iraqis, but at the same time did much to prepare them for nationality.

However, it should be borne in mind that what is becoming the Iraqi community has also grown in crises, in moments of great danger and common suffering, in the tremors of agitated masses and their outbursts of anger: if this community in embryo will in the future hold together and maintain its separate identity, the Uprising of 1920, the War of 1941, the *Wathbah* of 1948, the *Intifāḍah* of 1952, and the Revolution of 1958, though not free of divisive aspects, will be seen as stages in the progress of Iraq towards national coherence.

Of course, the national or patriotic idea was in 1958 still very weak. Even now it is as yet beyond the comprehension of the masses of the peasants. Moreover, in the towns the influence of the old norms, if considerably reduced, nonetheless persists. Interestingly enough, some of the peasant tribes, which had broken with their shaikhs and migrated to Baghdād to start a new life, ignored urban laws and entered into written compacts binding themselves to regulate their conduct and settle their disputes in accordance with their ancient tribal customs. Obviously, the psychology and ways of the old order–the work of long centuries–are still embedded in the life of broad strata of the people, and will not easily wither away. But most

crucial is the fact that the new national loyalty, while more in keeping with new conditions, is still hazy, uncertain of its direction (Iraqism? Pan-Arabism?), unacceptable to the Kurds, poorly assimilative of the Shī‘īs, and lacking the normative ethics, the warm intimacy, and the sustained emotional support once associated with the old loyalties.

3

THE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRINCIPAL RACIAL-RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND RELEVANT CAUSATIVE FACTORS

Iraq may be said to have been, in the time of the monarchy, roughly divided into three major religious zones (Map 1).

One of these zones, the most populous, was and remains the home of Shī‘īsm. In extent it covers all the provinces to the south of Baghdād.[1] From the point of view of physiography, it is a region of irrigated flatlands and, near the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, of marshes. In its ethnic composition it is Arab except for concentrations of Iranians in Baṣrah and the Holy Cities of Najaf and Karbalā’. Its Shī‘īsm is not unbroken. Here and there it is interspersed with islands of Sunnīsm, which are urban in character and, in their size, inconsiderable, except in Baṣrah and Nāṣiriyyah, where there are strong Sunnī minorities, and in the town of Zubair, to the southwest of Baṣrah, which is entirely Sunnī.[2]

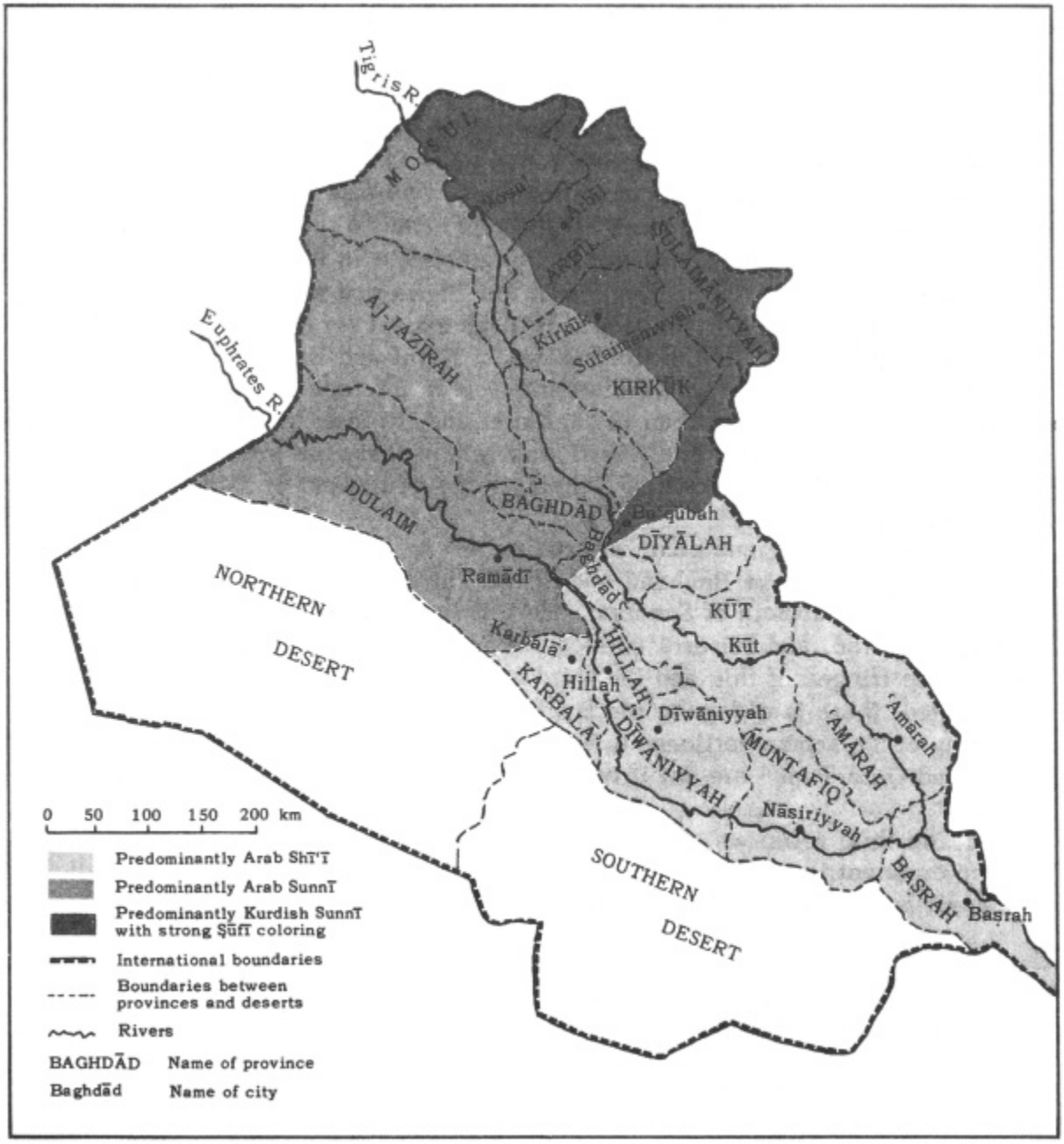
A second religious zone, embracing the Arab-inhabited valleys of the Euphrates above Baghdād and of the Tigris between Baghdād and Mosul, is the domain of Sunnīsm. Here only small Shī‘ī minorities at Dujail, Balad, and Sāmarrā’ breach the Sunnī continuity. On or not far from the fringes of this and the third zone, which will be presently delineated, there is along the old Baghdād-Mosul-Isṭanbul post road a string of Turkoman settlements which in Tal A‘far,[3] Daqūq, Ṭūzkhūrmātū, and Qara Tapa[4] are Shī‘ī, and in Altün Köprü, Kirkūk, and Kifrī are Sunnī.

The third religious zone coincides with the Kurdish rain-fed mountain crescent in the north and northeast of Iraq. This zone is also Sunnī, but has to be differentiated from the Arab Sunnī zone because, unlike the latter, it was in the period of the monarchy strongly permeated by mysticism and by its practitioners, the Ṣūfīs. This is not to say that there were no traces of Ṣūfīsm among the Arabs. Indeed, in the nineteenth century Baghdādīs

made their demonstrations or rebellions under the banner of the Ṣūfī Shaikh ‘Abd-ul-Qādir al-Gailānī.[5] However, in monarchic days Arab Sūfism,[6] though still showing signs of life, had–except in a few places, such as Sāmarrā’–none of the outward vigor that marked the mysticism of the Kurds.

MAP 1

Religious Map of Iraq



The three zones meet and intermingle in Greater Baghdād and in the province of Diyālah to the east of Baghdād. Here some of the Kurds, particularly in the district of Khāniqin and the ‘Aqd-il-Akrād quarter of Baghdād, belong to the Shī‘ī sect and are known locally as Fayliyyah Kurds.

In all three zones there are communities of non-Moslems, which altogether form today no more than 3 percent of the population of Iraq, but

in 1947, prior to the exodus of the Jews, constituted, according to an official census, about 6.7 percent (see Table 3-1).

What explanation could be given for this religious configuration of Iraq, that is, for the Shī‘īsm of the Arab south, the Sunnīsm of the Arab north, and the powerful influence that Sūfism had over the Kurdish belt?

Nearly a thousand years ago, Abū Bakr al-Khawārizmī (d. A.D. 993 or 1002) envied the people of Iraq because, as he put it, “in their midst are the tomb-sanctuaries of the Commander of the Faithful[7] . . . and of Husain,[8] the lord of martyrs . . . and because (among other things) Shī‘īsm is Iraqi.”[9] At the time the name Iraq referred not to the territory of present-day Iraq, but only to that part of it which lay south of a line connecting Anbār[10] (or, according to another view, Ḥadīthah) on the Euphrates and Takrīt on the Tigris, that is, it coincided, except for Baghdād and the areas to the north of Baghdād, with what is now the abode of the Shī‘īs. The heart of the sect was then, as now, the Middle

TABLE 3-1

Religious and Ethnic Composition of the Population of Iraq in 1947, a Rough Estimate[a]

	(in 000's)					
Denomination	*Urban*	*%*	*Rural*	*%*	*Total*	*%*
Moslems						
Arab Shī‘ī	673	41.9	1,671	56.5	2,344	51.4
Arab Sunnī	428	26.7	472	16.0	900	19.7
Kurd Sunnī	176	10.9	664	22.4	840	18.4
Persian Shī‘ī	49	3.1	3	.1	52	1.2
Turkoman Sunnī	39	2.5	11	.3	50	1.1
Turkoman Shī‘ī	11	.7	31	1.1	42	.9
Faylī Kurd Shī‘ī	14	.9	16	.5	30	.6
Non-Moslems						
Christians[b]	94	5.9	55	1.8	149	3.1
Jews	113	7.0	4	.2	117	2.6
Yazīdīs and Shabaks[c]	2	.1	31	1.0	33	.8
Sabeans[d]	5	.3	2	.1	7	.2
	1,604	100.0	2,960	100.0	4,564	100.0

[a]Excluding nomadic tribesmen estimated in 1947 at 170,000, and mostly Sunnīs.

[b]The Christians were, for the most part, Chaldeans, Armenians, and Assyrians.

[c]The religion of the Yazīdīs, who are a people of Kurdish origin, is basically synthetic and comprises Zoroastrian, Manichean, Nestorian, Moslem, and other elements. The center of their religious life is the sanctuary of their saint, Shaikh ‘Adī, near ‘Ain Sifnī to the northeast of Mosul.

The religion of the Shabaks, who are also Kurdish speaking, possesses Yazīdī and Shī‘ī characteristics.

[d]The religion of the Sabeans includes Zoroastrian, Manichean, and Babylonian features. Their principal religious practice is immersion in the river which, with its flowing water, is to them the life-creating force of the world.

Source: Estimate based on figures given in Iraq, Ministry of Social Affairs, *Census of Iraq-1947* (Baghdād, 1954).

Euphrates: it was in Karbalā’ in A.D. 680 that was shed Ḥusain’s blood, the real seed of religious Shī‘īsm. Undoubtedly the rule at Baghdād from A.D. 945 to 1055 of the Buwayhīs, a Persian Shī‘ī dynasty, and at Ḥillah and as far as Baṣrah from 1012 to 1150 of Āl-Mazyad, a Shī‘ī family of the Banī Asad, helped or consolidated the advance of Shī‘ī principles. So did also the power that the Shī‘ī Arab dynasty of the Musha’sha‘ Sādah wielded from the outskirts of Baghdād to the Gulf in the middle of the fifteenth century.[11] But before and after that time the country passed through a succession of conquests; the Euphrates and Tigris changed their main beds; medieval towns, like Wāsiṭ[12] and and Madā’in,[13] disappeared; new towns, like ‘Amārah and Nāṣiriyyah, came into life; old tribes were scattered or subdued, and new tribes from Arabia moved into the river valleys. Yet in the midst of all the vicissitude and instability one feature persisted: the overwhelmingly Shī‘ī character of this zone. How can one account for this Shī‘ī continuity, particularly in the face of long centuries od apparent Sunnī dominance, the dominance of the Ottoman Turks (1534-1622; 1638-1917) and of their nominal vassals, the Georgian Mamlūks (1749-1831)?

Apart from the power of persistence natural to religions and in particular to aggrieved sects, one obvious factor making for the perpetuation of Shī‘ī influence was the presence of the Shī‘ī sanctuaries at Najaf and Karbalā’, and of Shī‘ī schools at Najaf and Ḥillah. Another factor was the commercial and religious intercourse that the Shī‘īs of Iraq maintained, if interruptedly, with Shī‘ī Persia. At work also was what may be called the contagion of the environment. Bedouin tribes moving into the Shī‘ī zone–and Islam sat lightly on bedouins–tended in time, it would appear, to adapt themselves to its beliefs and practices. The same thing seems to have happened in the Sunnī zone. It is not without interest that the Shammar Jarba‘, whose *dīrah* or tribal domain was, in the period of the monarchy, in the Mosul province and in the Jazīrah between the Euphrates and the Tigris,

and the Shammar Ṭoqah, whose *dīrah* was on the Tigris south of Baghdād, are both offshoots of the same tribe, the Shammar of Jabal Shammar in Najd, Arabia; and yet one is Sunnī, and the other is Shī‘ī. Similarly, the Āl-Fatlah, who formed the backbone of the 1920 Iraqi uprising, branch from the Dulaim, but live on the middle Euphrates and are Shī‘ī, while the Dulaim itself lives on the Euphrates above Baghdād and is Sunnī. Again, the Jubūr sections who live on the Ḥillah branch of the Euphrates are Shī‘ī, while the Jubūr sections who live in Sharqāt to the southwest of Mosul are Sunnī. The process was in the Shī‘ī zone assisted by the missionary zeal of the *mūmans*, who were itinerant men of religion. It is thus to the initiative of these traveling Shī‘ī propagandists that Ibn Sanad, the historian of the Mamlūks, attributed in 1826 or thereabouts the conversion in his days into Rawāfiḍ (“Disavowers”), that is, Shī‘īs, of the Shaikhs of the Zubaid tribal confederation.[14] Similarly, in 1869 Ibrahīm al-Haidarī, a prominent Sunnī *‘ālim*,[15] blamed “the devils of the Disavowers” for the adoption of Shī‘īsm sixty years before by the Banū Tamīm.[16]

It may be wondered how Shī‘ī conversions took place seemingly under the very nose of the Sunnī government. The explanation is simple. During the greater part of the Ottoman period the writ of the authorities ran precariously outside the main towns, so that the mobile tribal confederations were in the countryside more often than not a power unto themselves. The conversions may have even come about on account of the government: the tribes’ intolerance of government–any government–and their association of government with oppression, plus the fact that the government was Sunnī, may have eased the task of the *mūmans* and the transition to Shī‘īsm.

It is necessary to add in parentheses that the government accorded the Shī‘īs full liberty to make their devotions in their own manner in all the places that they considered sacred, apparently because it stood to gain from the flow of pilgrims to Iraq. But in all other places, as in Baṣrah or in Baghdād proper, they were denied the free exercise of their religion.[17] This rule, which was in effect at least in the Mamlūk period (1749-1831), must have been relaxed in the course of the latter part of the nineteenth century, and more so after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. Under the monarchy the religious freedom of the Shī‘īs became complete.

In turning to the northern Arab Sunnī zone and rapidly reviewing its history, the thing that catches our notice is that Shī‘īsm never penetrated it in strength. It is true that a Shī‘ī dynasty, the Ḥamdānīs, wielded authority in Mosul between 905 and 979, but it hardly made any dent in the Sunnī loyalty of its inhabitants.[18] An attempt to encourage Shī‘īsm by Badr-ud-Dīn Lu’lu, a slave who ruled over Mosul for about forty years in the first half of the thirteenth century, failed to evoke any response among the Mosulites.[19] With minor exceptions, the whole zone remained steadfast in its attachment to Sunnīsm down to our own time. Perhaps the most crucial explanation for this is the fact that, in their economic relationships, the regions of Mosul and the upper Euphrates were oriented toward Sunnī Syria and, in a lesser degree, toward Sunnī Turkey. Indeed, it would not be going too far to say that in the days of the monarchy the people of Mosul were closer in outlook and temperament to the Arabs of Syria or, more specifically, of Aleppo, than to the Arabs of central and southern Iraq.

It remains to account for the peculiarity of strong Ṣūfī influence in the Kurdish belt. I do not know whether it is true, as I have heard it said, that the Kurds are more prone than the Arabs of Iraq to the habits of thought and feeling characteristic of the Ṣūfīs, or that the susceptibility of the Kurds to Ṣūfism is due to its consonance with their pre-Islamic beliefs. Perhaps the phenomenon could, at least in part, be explained by the relatively recent conversion of many of the tribal Kurds to the mystic paths. It was only in the early nineteenth century and through the efforts of Mawlāna Khālid (d. 1826), a member of the Kurdish Jāf tribe, that the Naqshbandī order was first instituted in Iraqi Kurdistan. It was also at about the same time that the older Qādirī path[20] attained the climax of its strength in that region.[21] The Naqsh-bandīs observed the precepts of Muḥammad Bahā‘-ud-Dīn al-Bukhārī (1317-1389) and the Qādirīs those of Shaikh ‘Abd-ul-Qādir al-Gailānī (1077-1166). Between them, these two orders dominated to an overwhelming degree Kurdish religious life in the time of the monarchy, but since the thirties, if not earlier, they have been waning due to the decline of religion and the men of religion generally.

4

SOME RELIGIOUS-CLASS AND ETHNIC-CLASS CORRELATIONS

One of the interesting facts that emerges from a juxtaposition of the religious and social features of the monarchic Iraq of the twenties is the degree of affinity that existed between confessional allegiance and social standing in various parts in the south and center of the country. Thus at that time the most influential *mallāks* or landlords of the province of Baṣrah were, with one exception, Sunnī, while the cultivators of their palm gardens were overwhelmingly Shī‘ī. The exception was the Shaikh of Muḥammarah, who owned “much property” in the province. The leaders of Arab society in Baṣrah city itself were also Sunnī, while the majority of the town people were Shī‘ī. The Shī‘ī divines, however, occupied a position of no little importance.[1] In several other towns of the south, but not in the Shī‘ī Holy Cities, the Sunnī element, always a minority, was socially preponderant and consisted by and large of affluent merchants and landowners. The small bazaars on the canals, in the thick of the Shī‘ī communities, and the neighboring desert markets were also dominated by astute Sunnī traders from Najd, Arabia.[2] Again, in the province of Muntafiq the peasants were invariably Shī‘ī, whereas many of their landed overlords came from one Sunnī tribal family, that of the Sa‘dūn.[3] Similarly, in the Ḥillah district, Hazzā‘ ibn Muḥaimid, the head shaikh of Mu‘āmrah, a branch of the Zubaid confederation, was Sunnī, although his cultivating tribesmen were, in their majority, Shī‘ī.[4] In Baghdād too, where the two sects enjoyed almost a numerical parity, the socially dominant families were, with some exceptions, Sunnī.[5] Moreover, in the Iraqi army of the thirties, the officers were Sunnī but the rank and file that they commanded was drawn, for the most part, from the agricultural Shī‘ī tribesmen of the south.[6] In brief, the Sunnī-Shī‘ī dichotomy coincided to no little degree with a deep-seated social economic cleavage. In the light of the existing factual

evidence, it is not possible to affirm or deny that here class differences were fundamental and religious differences derivative. Of course, Sunnī social dominance had its immediate roots in the preceding historical situation. In some rural areas, as in the countryside of the Muntafiq, it derived from the dominance of Sunnī tribal warring People of the Camel over Shī‘ī tribal peasants, or Marshdwellers, or People of the Sheep.[7] In the towns it flowed from Sunnī Ottoman political dominance. The latter political factor provides, it should be clear, no more than a proximate explanation, for in view of Iraq’s status of dependence, the decisive causes of its politics lay beyond its frontiers, and it is not within the scope of this study to pursue them there. At the same time, it should be pointed out that Shī‘īsm, as an ideology and in its practical form, had a natural appeal to underdogs that stemmed from its preoccupation with suffering and from the centrality of the passion motif in its Islam.

If in the south of Iraq religious and class divisions coincided to a certain extent, in the north, in ethnically mixed areas, the distinction between classes was, oftentimes, concomitantly a distinction between races. Thus the district of Arbīl embraced sixty-five villages populated entirely by Kurds, but no fewer than forty-five of these villages were owned by one or other of the Arbīl notables, who were mostly Turkoman by race. In the town of Arbīl itself, the latter belonged, to be sure, to the wealthy stratum and had their residences on top of a circular mound about 150 feet high, while the Kurds, who formed three-quarters and, as a rule, the poorer segment of the inhabitants, lived by and large in houses round the foot of the mound on its east and south sides. But, of course, there were Turkmen who were not well-to-do and who dwelt also in this part of the town.[8] Again, landed Kirkuklīs, who in their upper ranks were mainly Turkmen or Kurds who regarded themselves as Turkmen,[9] owned much of the agricultural country in the Mālḥah region, along the Lesser Zāb, and in the western outskirts of Kirkūk, but their ploughs and sheep were tended by Arabs.[10] In Mosul the chief lords of the land were principally Moslem Arabs, while not a few of their peasants in the surrounding villages were Christian Arameans.

Even in the presumably ethnically homogeneous Kurdish districts, the nontribal peasants, called *ra‘iyyah* (“subjects”) or *miskīns* (“miserables”), seemed to be almost a different race from the landed aghas[11] and their tribal

retainers and fighting men.[12] These peasants could indeed easily be distinguished by their countenance and their particular dialect from the more recently settled tribal farmers and the other clansmen and their aghas who, incidentally, in at least some parts, exercised over the *miskīns*, in a literal sense, the powers of life and death.[13] C. J. Rich, the East India Company's Resident at Baghdād, maintained in 1820 that "several of the best authorities" had confirmed to him that the peasants of Kurdistan in his days were "a totally distinct race" from the clannish Kurds[14] and he wondered whether they might not have been the original inhabitants of these parts who had at some point been subdued by the nomadic montane tribesmen.[15] His view has still its adherents today, but the Kurds themselves believe that the clansmen and the *miskīns* belong to the same race and that differences in nutrition and way of living could account for the differences in their physiognomy and other characteristics: the nomadic or originally nomadic clansmen, who are taller and sturdier, ate better and led a more wholesome life.[16]

The trends in the relationship of sects or ethnic groups to classes, characteristic of the twenties, had by the last decade of the monarchy shifted to a certain degree, and sometimes significantly.

In the north, the Turkoman social preponderance in such towns as Arbīl or Kirkūk gradually weakened, as was bound to happen after the breakdown of the political supremacy of the Ottoman Turks, with which it had been intimately connected. On the other hand, the power of the Kurdish tribal aghas over the lives of the *miskīns* was reinforced by the consolidation and widening of their hold over the land: in 1958 the ruling family of the Jāf tribe, the Jāf Begzādas, alone owned 539,333 dūnums[17] in the provinces of Sulaimāniyyah, Kirkūk, and Diyālah (see Table 5-3). No measures enhanced the social position of the tribal aghas and of their Arab analogues, the tribal shaikhs, as greatly as the Land Settlement Laws of 1932 and 1938, which facilitated the transfer into their hands of vast expanses of state and customary tribal land.

In the southern and central parts of Iraq, the relative social situation of the Shī'īs noticeably changed. Symptomatic of this was the fact that in the forties, in the upper-income circles, Sunnīs began giving their daughters in marriage to Shī'īs, when only a few decades before the impediment to such

intermarriage seemed insurmountable. There were also other indications. Before 1947 not a single Shīʻī was raised to the premiership, but between 1947 and 1958 four Shīʻīs attained this rank (see Table 7-4). Again, in the first decade of the monarchy only 17.7 percent of the ministerial appointments went to the members of this sect, but in the last decade of the monarchy their share reached as high as 34.7 percent (see Table 4-1). However, their weight on the governmental level was never decisive. On the other hand, Shīʻī families in the upper income brackets accumulated considerable economic power. In fact, it was the rise in their economic position which in great measure explained the change in their intersectarian social status, and at the same time pushed toward an increase in their share of state authority. Their advance in the economic sphere was on the whole encouraged rather than hindered politically, because it suited the balance-of-power interests not only of the English but also–from the forties onward–of the monarchy which, like the English, was an extraneous political factor, the kings being of non-Iraqi origin. At any rate, the growth of the Shīʻī families economically is beyond dispute. In 1958, out of Iraq's seven biggest landowners, that is, owners of over 100,000 dūnums of land, six were Shīʻīs (see Table 4-2).[18] In the same year, of the total of 49 families owning more than 30,000 dūnums or an aggregate of 5,457,354 dūnums, 23 were Shīʻī Arab, 14 Sunnī Arab, 11 Kurdish, and 1 Jewish. The Shīʻī families alone possessed 44.3 percent of the whole area. The others held 30.8 percent, 24.1 percent, and .8 percent respectively (see Tables 5-3 and 5-4). Of course, larger estates did not necessarily bring higher incomes. On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that, with the completion in 1956 of the Wādī Tharthār and Ḥabbāniyyah water-control schemes, the value of land rose in the flow-irrigated regions where Shīʻī families had their property. More than that, the Shīʻī merchants succeeded to first place in the trade of Baghdād after the exodus of the Jews in 1949. Access to state offices being more difficult for them than for Sunnīs–now not so much by reason of calculating prejudice as on account of their lower educational qualifications, the result, really, of their fewer opportunities in earlier times–the Shīʻīs had turned their energies toward commerce, and thus come to excel in this line of activity. However, Iraq's young private industry was from the first and remained, by and large, in the hands of the Sunnīs. This may have had something to do with the fact that in its beginnings, at least, it

was to no little extent dependent upon the help and goodwill of the government.

TABLE 4-1

Shīʿī Ministerial Appointments under the Monarchy (1921-1958), Excluding Appointments to Premiership

Years	Total no. of appointments	No. of Shīʿī appointments	Percent
1921-1932 (period of "mandate")	113	20	17.7
1932-1936	57	9	15.8
1936-1941 (period of military coups)	65	18	27.7
1941-1946 (period of "second British occupation")	89	25	28.1
1947-1958	251	87	34.7[a]
	575	159	27.7

[a]Shīʿī Arabs' estimated percentage in total 1947 population: 51.4.

TABLE 4-2

Iraq's Biggest Landowners in 1958, or Owners of More Than 100,000 Dunums of Land[a]

Name	Stratum or class other than landownership	Tribe	Sect and ethnic origin	Area owned in dūnums[b]	Province
Aḥmad ʿAjīl al-Yāwer	paramount shaikh	Shammar	Sunnī Arab	259,509	Mosul and Baghdād
Muḥammad al-Habīb al-Àmīr[c]	paramount shaikh	Rabīʿah	Shīʿī Arab	206,473	Kūt
Balāsim Muḥammad al-Yāsīn	shaikh	Mayyāḥ[d]	Shīʿī Arab	199,826	Kūt
ʿAlī al-Ḥabīb al-Amīr[e]	shaikh	Rabīʿah	Shīʿī Arab	196,020	Kūt
Ḥasan al-Khayyūn al-Qaṣṣāb	shaikh	as-Sarrāi	Shīʿī Arab	146,195	Kūt
Ṇāyef aj-Jaryān[e]	shaikh	Albū Sulṭān	Shīʿī Arab	108,074	Ḥillah
ʿAbd-ul-Hādī ach-Chalabī	merchant	–	Shīʿī Arab	104,158	Baghdād

[a]This table does not include Mūḥan al-Khairallah, a Shīʿī Arab from the Muntafiq province and the Shaikh of ash-Shuweilāt tribe, inasmuch as his title to the estates under his control had not been legally settled by 1958. The table also excludes the then virtually permanent leaseholders of large tracts of state land in ʿA mārah province. For the latter, turn to Table 6-13.

[b]One dūnum = 0.618 acre.

[c]Father-in-law of Crown Prince ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh and brother of ʻAlī al-Ḥabīb al-Amīr, who is listed above.

[d]A section of the Rabīʻah tribe.

[e]Died before the 1958 Revolution, but his property had not been divided among his heirs.

Source: Figures obtained from the records of the Ministry of Agrarian Reform, February 1964.

If in 1958 the richest of the rich were often Shīʻīs, so were also predominantly the poorest of the poor, notably the one hundred thousand or so *Shurūgīs*, "the Easterners"–the migrants from the ʻAmārah tribal country–whose *ṣarīfas* or mud huts dotted the landscape of Greater Baghdād. Their somber wretchedness was no doubt a factor in the intense bitterness of the mass upheaval that gripped the Iraqi capital on the day of the Revolution of July.

The final note here must be one of caution against exaggerating the contrasts that have been described, for it is necessary to bear in mind that the correspondence between the sectarian and class cleavages was never complete, that there were always very poor Sunnīs, that they and the Shīʻī poor were brethren in adversity, and that, *mutatis mutandis*, Baghdād–no less than the rest of Iraq–in both its Shīʻī and Sunnī domains, was under the monarchy, as it had been in the Middle Ages, for the rich a vast habitation and for the poor a dwelling of constraint and distress.[19]

PART II

THE MAIN CLASSES AND STATUS GROUPS

5

THE *MALLĀKS* OR LANDOWNERS

In the Iraq of 1958, which was inhabited by about six and a half million people, there were 253,254 landholders (see Table 5-1) with varying degrees of legal rights over 32.1 million agricultural dūnums, of which only 23.3 million were actually exploited. They held the land under the types of tenure and in the proportions set forth below[1]:

	Area in million dūnums	%
Ṭāpū	12.48	38.8
Lazmah	10.59	32.9
Mulk	.26	.8
Waqf	.44	1.4
Mīrī ṣirf land held by lease	4.68	14.6
Holdings of as yet unsettled title	3.70	11.5
	32.15	100.0

Obviously, the holders whose title to the land had not yet been legally established, could not be said to have been *mallāks*, that is, landowners. Nor is the designation applicable to the leaseholders of *mīrī ṣirf* or purely state land, even though in many instances the leases were virtually permanent and heritable.[2] Strictly speaking, only the holders of *mulk* were *mallāks*, but in practice the term came to refer also to the holders of land in *ṭāpū* and *lazmah*.[3] *Mulk*, which was confined to towns and their immediate vicinity, constituted absolute private property and was a very old form of tenure. For example, one family, an ancestor of whom was instrumental in building Karbalā' about A.D. 1200–at which time it was apparently a village with an insignificant shrine–had in its possession title deeds to lands granted to it some six and a half centuries ago.[4] The *ṭāpū* and *lazmah* ttenures were of

more recent origin, *ṭāpū* being the product of the Ottoman Land Code of 1858, and *lazmah* of the *Lazmah* Law of 1932. Both *ṭāpū* and *lazmah* involved a conditional alienation of state land to individuals, the right of ultimate ownership being in theory retained by the state, the land reverting to it if not used, in the case of *ṭāpū*, for at least three years and, in the case of *lazmah*, for at least four years. However, both were heritable tenures and both could be transferred by sale to other individuals, the *ṭāpū* unconditionally and the *lazmah* subject to government approval. In practice, therefore, they did not differ significantly from private property, the more so inasmuch as the government never exercised its theoretical right of escheat.[5]

TABLE 5-1

Distribution of Privately Held Agricultural Land before the July 1958 Revolution

Size group (in dūnums)[a]		Holders		Area		Average area
		Number	%	(in dūnums)	%	(in dūnums)
Under 1		23,089	9.12	8,599	.03	.73
1 - under	4	50,021	19.75	93,722	.29	1.87
4 - under	10	40,475	15.98	243,004	.76	6.00
10 - under	50	71,049	28.05	1,671,484	5.20	23.52
50 - under	100	29,884	11.80	2,055,856	6.40	68.79
100 - under	500	31,508	12.44	5,799,012	18.03	184.04
500 - under	1,000	2,916	1.15	1,992,431	6.20	683.27
1,000 - under	2,000	1,832	.72	2,560,190	7.96	1,397.48
2,000 - under	10,000	2,128	.84	8,550,322	26.59	4,018.01
10,000 - under	20,000	224	.09	3,030,773	9.42	13,530.24
20,000 - under	50,000	95	.04	2,998,607	9.32	31,564.28
50,000 - under	100,000	25	.01	1,725,988	5.37	69,039.52
Over 100,000		8	.003	1,424,825	4.43	178,103.12
Total		253,254	100.00[b]	32,154,813	100.00	

[a]One dūnum = 0.618 acre.

[b]discrepancy due to rounding of figures.

Source: Iraq, Ministry of Agrarian Reform, February 1964.

Most of the *mallāks* were very small proprietors, as could be inferred from the fact that 72.9 percent of all landholders possessed less than 50 dūnums, and only 6.2 percent of the total area. Of course, about four-fifths of the families of Iraq owned no land whatever. At the same time, fewer than 1 percent of all landholders and *mallāks* controlled 55.1 percent of all privately held land.

The small *mallāks* were largely to be found in the areas that had long been intensively cultivated, such as the water-wheel region in the upper middle Euphrates around the towns of Hīt, Ḥadīthah, and ʻĀnah; the Khāliṣ valley, and the lower Diyālah, where some of the ancient canal works had survived; the fertile tracts between Kirkūk, Arbīl, and Mosul, which had been contiguous to the guarded old post road to Isṭanbūl; the district of Abū-l-Khaṣīb, the site of the celebrated gardens of Baṣrah mentioned in Arab history; and, finally, the regions of the Hindiyyah and Shāmiyyah Shaṭṭs of the mid-Euphrates which, in contrast to the regions of the southern Tigris, were very thickly settled due to the fact that the waters of the Euphrates could always be more easily distributed than those of the Tigris on account of the slope of the ground levels.

The phenomenon of the extremely small proprietor was the direct effect of the Islamic law of inheritance which incidentally, by its repeated dispersal of large property, had persistently made for the political weakness of the "aristocratic" class in the history of Iraq.[6] The conversion by some families of their estate into a *waqf*, that is, into an endowment for the benefit of their descendants, while preserving the estate intact, did not necessarily contribute to the economic strength of these families, inasmuch as the proceeds remained subject to the fractionary processes of the law.

As a rule, the large *mallāks* predominated in the areas that, through the introduction of pumps and the building of barrages, had been relatively recently put to the plough, and where at the same time tribal influence was still or had been potent, as in the Sinjār district or the regions on the Gharrāf or Ḥillah Shaṭṭs.

Concentration of property was at its utmost in Kūt. As is clear from Table 5-2, in 1958 22 persons held 82 percent of all the *ṭāpū* lands in this province, and 49 persons 73 percent of all the *lazmah* lands. Moreover, the same person not infrequently held land in both *lazmah* and *ṭāpū*.

Some *mallāks* had huge estates: Aḥmad ʻAjīl al-Yāwer, the paramount shaikh of Shammar, owned 259,509 dūnums; Muḥammad al-Ḥabīb al-Amīr, the paramount shaikh of Rabīʻah, 206,473 dūnums; and Balāsim Muḥammad al-Yāsīn, one of the shaikhs of Mayyāḥ, 199,826 dūnums, to cite a few examples. For the other biggest landowners in 1958, turn to Table 4-2.

TABLE 5-2

Distribution of Landholdings in Kūt Province in 1958

Total area of *mulk* lands	86 dūnums
Total area of *ṭāpū* lands	746,477 dūnums, 618,973 of which were cultivable
Total area of *lazmah* lands	1,770,897 dūnums, 1,612,153 of which were cultivable

Size of landholdings	*Total area of landholdings in dūnums*	*No. of Landholders*
Ṭāpū lands		
Between 20,001 and 70,000 dūnums	479,800	11
Between 10,001 and 20,000 dūnums	114,900	7
Between 3,000 and 10,000 dūnums	22,445	4
	617,145[a]	22
Lazmah lands		
Between 80,000 and 200,000 dūnums	716,333	5
Between 20,001 and 70,000 dūnums	193,723	8
Between 10,001 and 20,000 dūnums	239,867	17
Between 6,000 and 10,000 dūnums	142,343	19
	1,292,266[b]	49

[a]Equals 827o of all *ṭāpū* lands.

[b]Equals 73% of all *lazmah* lands.

Source: Unpublished Letter No. 1101 of 22 January 1958 from Makkī Jamīl, Director General of Land Settlement, to the Minister of Justice.

The largest estates were not necessarily the richest. The price of land varied, of course, according to location, climatic factors, soil fertility, and other circumstances. In general, an irrigated field was far more valuable than one situated in the rainfall zone: a good rain-fed dūnum was worth on the average about 2 dīnārs in 1958, and a good irrigated dūnum about 10 dīnārs. Exceptionally good land, however, brought a much higher price: in 1957 ‘Abd-ul-Hādī ach-Chalabī, the wealthiest merchant of Baghdād, sold a small portion of his estate, the intensively developed Lāṭifiyyah–which had been in the thirties and forties in the hands of Andrew Weir and Co., a British concern–for 50 dīnārs a dūnum,[7] so that the 104,158 dūnums that he owned on the eve of the July Revolution,[8] had probably a higher value than the 259,509 dūnums that belonged to the paramount shaikh of Shammar.

The families that in the last year of the monarchy owned more than 30,000 dūnums and in effect formed the living nucleus of Iraqi landlordry

are listed in the accompanying Table 5-3. They were 49 in number, and owned between them 5,457,354 dūnums[9] or 16.8 percent of all privately held agricultural land. Twenty-two of them pertained to the tribal shaikhly order, 12 to the stratum of *sādah*, that is, claimants of descent from the Prophet, and 11 to the mercantile class; and they accounted, respectively, for 51, 31, and 12.3 percent of the area just cited. For other particulars on the composition of these and the remaining four families, consult Table 5-4.

Obviously, Iraq's principal *mallāks* did not constitute a homogeneous whole. True, their relationship to the land united them, and this no doubt made for a certain similarity, if not identity, of interests and objectives. But in the origin of their class position, in their status, their power, their mentality, their values, and their social function, they were dissimilar. This is a subject of no little importance. Some light will be shed upon it in the pages that follow.

TABLE 5-3

Iraq's Principal Landed Families in 1958, or Families Owning More Than 30,000 Dūnums[a]

Name of Family	*Class, stratum, or occupation other than landownership*	*Tribe*[b]	*Sect and ethnic origin*	*Area owned in dūnums*	*Province*
Jāf Begzādah	Tribal chiefs and *sādah*;[c] deputies	Jāf	Sunnī Kurd	539,333[d]	Sulaimāniyyah, Diyālah, and Kirkūk
al-Amīr[e]	Tribal shaikhs; one state minister and one senator; related by marriage to Crown Prince 'Abd-ul-Ilāh	Rabī'ah	Shī'ī Arab	442,066	Kūt
al-Yāwer	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	Shammar	Sunnī Arab	346,747	Mosul
al-Yāsīn	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	Mayyāḥ[f]	Shī'ī Arab	344,168	Kūt
al-Farḥān[g]	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	Shammar	Sunnī Arab	310,314	Mosul, Baghdād, and Dulaim
al-Qaṣṣāb	Tribal shaikhs	as-Sarrāi[f]	Shī'ī Arab	261,924	Kūt
as-Sa'dūn	Ex-tribal shaikhs[h] and *sādah*, one prime minister; deputies and senators; related by marriage to ex-Premier Tawfīq as-Suwaidī	–	Sunnī Arab	219,765[i]	Kūt, Baṣrah, Ḥillah; and Mosul
as-Sayyid Rustum as-Sayyid Muḥammad Kakai	*Sādah* of the Kakai religious sect	–	Kakai Kurd	191,039	Kirkūk
aj-Jaryān[j]	Tribal shaikhs; deputies; related by marriage to ex-Premier Ṣāliḥ Jabr	Albū Sulṭān, a section of Zubaid	Shī'ī Arab	183,722	Ḥillah and Kūt
Royal family	*Sādah*	–	Sunnī Arab	177,000	Baghdād and Kūt
aṭ-Ṭālabānī	Shaikhs of Qādirī mystic order; deputies	Related to Zangana	Sunnī Kurd	137,163	Kirkūk and Diyālah
Suhail an-Najm	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	Banū Tamīm	Shī'ī Arab	125,502	Baghdād and Diyālah

Abū Ṭabīkh	Tribal *sādah*; one deputy and one senator	–	Shī'ī Arab	124,496	Dīwāniyyah
Āl-Mgūṭar	Tribal *sādah*; deputies	–	Shī'ī Arab	117,839	Dīwāniyyah
ach-Chalabī	Merchants; state ministers; deputies	–	Shī'ī Arab	108,810	Baghdād and Diyālah
al-Khuḍairī	Merchants; owners of river steamers; deputies; high state officials	–	Sunnī Arab	100,159	Kūt, Baghdād, and Diyalah
Āl-Jamīl	*Sādah* and *'ulamā'*;[k] one state minister; one senator; deputies	–	Sunnī Arab	92,166	Diyālah and Baghdād
Khuḍair	Tribal shaikhs	Juḥaish	Sunnī Arab	84,592	Mosul and Baghdād
Bābān	Ex-rulers of Sulāimaniyyah; one premier; state ministers; deputies	–	Sunnī Arabized Kurd	81,353	Kirkūk, Diyālah, and Ḥillah
al-Ḥafīd al-Barzinjī	*Sadāh* and shaikhs of Qādirī mystic order; one state minister	–	Sunnī Kurk	71,716	Sulaimāniyyah
aṣ-Ṣagab	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	as-Sa'īd, offshoot of Albū Sulṭān	Shī'ī Arab	70,296	Dīwāniyyah
ash-Shallāl	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	Shammar	Sunnī Arab	62,363	Mosul and Baghdād
ad-Dāmirchī	Merchants; one deputy	–	Shī'ī Arab	61,068	Diyālah
aj-Jāder	Merchants; one deputy	–	Sunnī Arabized Kurd	59,340	Mosul and Baghdād
al-Mirjān	Slave-issuing contractors, wheat mill proprietors, and real estate owners; one premier and one senator	–	Shī'ī Arab	58,764	Ḥillah and Dīwāniyyah
Aṭiyyah, al-Ghaḍbān	Tribal shaikhs; deputies	al-Ḥmaidāt	Shī'ī Arab	56,447	Dīwāniyyah
al-Khaizarān	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	'Azzah	Sunnī Arab	55,727	Diyālah
ad-Dahwī	Merchants; one deputy	–	Shī'ī Arab	54,839	Diyālah, Baghdād and Kūt
Pāchachī	Originally merchants; state ministers; two premiers; deputies	–	Sunnī Arab	54,588	Baghdād
Shamdīn Agha	Semitribal leaders; deputies; one state minister	Sulaivānī	Sunnī Kurd	53,040	Mosul
Ṣabunjī	Merchants; deputies	–	Sunnī Arab	52,945	Mosul
Aḥmad Pasha	Tribal leaders; deputies	Diza'ī	Sunnī Kurd	52,350	Arbīl
ash-Shahad	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	Budair	Shī'ī Arab	49,560	Dīwāniyyah
Nāṣir Mirza	Shaikhs of Yazīdīs	–	Yazīdī Kurd	47,358	Mosul
ash-Sha'lān as-Salmān	Tribal shaikhs; deputies	Khazā'il	Shī'ī Arab	46,959	Dīwāniyyah
Ghulām Riḍa Khān	Sādah; family of ex-governor of Persian Pusht-i-Kuh	belong to Rabī'ah	Shī'ī Arab	43,741	'Amārah
Daniel (Sassoon)	Originally tax farmers; deputies	–	Jewish	43,490	Ḥillah and Dīwāniyyah
az-Zraijī	Tribal shaikhs	Rabī'ah	Shī'ī Arab	42,806	Kūt and Muntafiq
Aḥmad-i Khānaqah	Sādah and shaikhs of Naqshbandī mystic order; one deputy	–	Sunnī Kurd	42,351	Kirkūk
Kashmūlah	Sheep traders; officials; effective rulers of Mosul's Manqūshah quarter; one deputy	–	Sunnī Arab	42,178	Mosul
Mīran ibn Qāder	Tribal leaders; deputies	Mīr Maḥmalī, a section of Khoshnao	Sunnī Kurd	41,584	Arbīl
Āl 'Abd-ul-'Abbās	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	Banū Zuraij	Shī'ī Arab	40,555	Dīwāniyyah
Āl Lhaims	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	Albū Sulṭān	Shī'ī Arab	40,439	Ḥillah
Ḥadīd	Merchants; one state minister; deputies	–	Sunnī Arab	39,966	Mosul
Aghawāt	Sheep and wheat traders; effective rulers of Mosul's Bāb al-Baid quarter; one deputy	–	Sunnī Arab	39,509	Mosul
Āl-Ḥasan	Tribal shaikhs; one deputy	Banū Zuraij	Shī'ī Arab	38,745	Dīwāniyyah
as-Sayyid 'Abd-ul-'Azīz 'Abd-ul-Ḥasan	Tribal *sādah*	–	Shī'ī Arab	37,821	Dīwāniyyah
al-Barrāk	Tribal shaikhs; ministers of state; deputies	Albū Sulṭān	Shī'ī Arab	35,299	Ḥillah
ash-Shurafā'	Tribal *sādah*	–	Shī'ī Arab	33,352	Ḥillah
Total				5,457,354[ℓ]	

[a]Excludes the big landed families of the Muntafiq province–mainly Āl-Khairallahs and as-Sa'dūns–who owned between them more than 300,000 dūnums. One dūnum = 0.618 acre.

[b]For the geographic location of the tribes, see Map 3.

[c]Claimants of descent from the Prophet.

[d]Much of their land was of the rain-fed variety, which is not as rich as the artificially irrigated land of, say, al-Amīrs in the south.

[e]The head of the family was the father-in-law of Crown Prince Abd-ul-Ilāh.

[f]Mayyāḥ is a section of the Rabī‘ah tribe, as is as-Sarrāi.

[g]Al-Farḥāns are cousins of al-Yāwers.

[h]As-Sa‘dūns had been in the 19th and earlier centuries the leaders of the Muntafiq Confederation.

[i]Does not include their very large possessions in the Muntafiq province.

[j]The head of the family was the father-in-law of ex-Premier Ṣāliḥ Jabr.

[k]Mn learned in religion.

[l]Equals 16.8% of total privately held agricultural land.

Source: Figures obtained from the records of the Ministry of Agrarian Reform, February 1964.

TABLE 5-4

Summary of Table 5-3

	No. of families	%	Area owned in dūnums[a]	%
Class or stratum other than landowners				
Sādah[b]	*12*	*24.5*	*1,690,619*	*31.0*
Royal *sādah*	1		177,000	
Sādah and *'ulamā'*[c]	1		92,166	
Sādah and shaikhs of mystic order	2		114,067	
Tribal *sādah*	6		1,072,606	
Other *sādah*	2		234,780	
Non-*sādah* religious shaikhs	*2*	*4.1*	*184,521*	*3.4*
Shaikhs of mystic order	1		137,163	
Religious shaikhs	1		47,358	
Non-*sādah* tribal shaikhs	*22*	*44.9*	*2,785,205*	*51.0*
Merchants	*11*	*22.4*	*672,166*	*12.3*
Others	2[d]	*4.1*	*124,843*	*2.3*
Total	*49*	*100.0*	*5,457,354*	*100.0*
The principal landed families and the state				
Royal family	1	2.1	177,000	3.2
Family related by marriage to royal house (al-Amīrs)	1	2.1	442,066	8.1
Families that provided premiers	4	8.1	414,470	7.6
Family related by marriage to premier	1	2.1	183,722	3.4
Families that provided state ministers other than premiers	6	12.2	400,997	7.4
Family that provided high state officials below rank of minister	1	2.1	100,159	1.8
Families that merely provided deputies or senators	27	55.1	2,996,307	54.9
Other families	8	16.2	742,633	13.6
Total	*49*	*100.0*	*5,457,354*	*100.0*
Sect and ethnic origin of families				
Shī'ī Arab	23	46.9	2,419,218	44.3
Sunnī Arab	14	28.6	1,678,019	30.8
Sunnī Kurd	9	18.2	1,078,230	19.7
Kakai Kurd	1	2.1	191,039	3.5
Yazīdī Kurd	1	2.1	47,358	.9
Jewish	1	2.1	43,490	.8
Total	*49*	*100.0*	*5,457,354*	*100.0*

[a]One dūnum = 0.618 acre.

[b]Claimants of descent from Prophet.

[c]Men learned in religion.

[d]One tax-farming family and one family of exrulers of semi-independent principality.

6

THE SHAIKHS, AGHAS, AND PEASANTS

The Arab tribal shaikhs and Kurdish tribal begs or aghas,[1] who in the monarchic period formed the most important segment of the landed class, and until 1958 dominated the greater number of the peasants of Iraq, were historically the product of the life of frequent raids and relatively rapid change that characterized the flatlands of the Tigris and Euphrates and the Kurdish mountain belt in the nineteenth and earlier centuries. In those times the existential tribal situation emphasized prowess, decision, mobility. Hence the origin of the begs, aghas, and shaikhs as a warrior group, and the tendency for them to rise from among the more mobile tribes or, more specifically, from the montane mounted nomads in Kurdistan and the nomadic *ahl-il-ibl*– People of the Camel–in Arab Iraq. Of course, the evolution of the shaikhly[2] stratum by no means followed a uniform pattern. In some instances, their dominance represented in its inception the dominance of one nomadic camel tribe, which was itself but an extension of one family group, over many semiagricultural tribes, tribal marshmen, or tribal sheep breeders; or the dominance of montane tribal nomads over nontribal cultivators. This dominance assumed more and more the aspect of class dominance because of three factors: first, the contempt which the People of the Camel had for other tribes, or which the montane nomads had for non-tribal peasants, and their disdain to intermarry with them; second, the transformation by the Ottomans of many of the dominant shaikhs, begs, and aghas into tax farmers from their original position as tribute-receiving chiefs or appointees of these chiefs; and, finally, their conversion into regular landowners by the introduction in the nineteenth century of the *ṭāpū* and in the twentieth of the *lazmah* semiprivate property systems. In other cases, where shaikhly leadership was not provided by an alien tribe but was native to the tribe itself, the rank of shaikh or Kurdish tribal lord was

originally connected with the function of protecting the tribe, and presupposed the natural qualities needed for that function. Shaikhly leadership, in other terms, was a military leadership clearly differentiated and increasingly hereditary, but in its first stages patriarchal in its essence and with few of the earmarks of a class position, and only began to take the latter form as the once free-living tribe became more intimately bound to the land. The class aspect of the shaikh's position hardened in its mold with the rise of the large *muqāṭa'ahs* or estates, and the leasing or registering of these estates or of whole villages by the Turks in the tribal chief's own name. It crystallized further with the cessation of tribal raids, the growing commercialization of agriculture, and the alienation of more villages and increasingly larger estates in *lazmah* to the begs, aghas, and shaikhs. But it is necessary to descend to particulars.

The modern shaikh, though bearing little resemblance to the shaikh of earlier centuries, was in a sense the result of the advance of nomadic power that was the unavoidable concomitance of the gradual decay of organized irrigation from the tenth century onward and of the weakening of the towns, especially after the eclipse of the 'Abbasid Caliphate and the sack of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258.

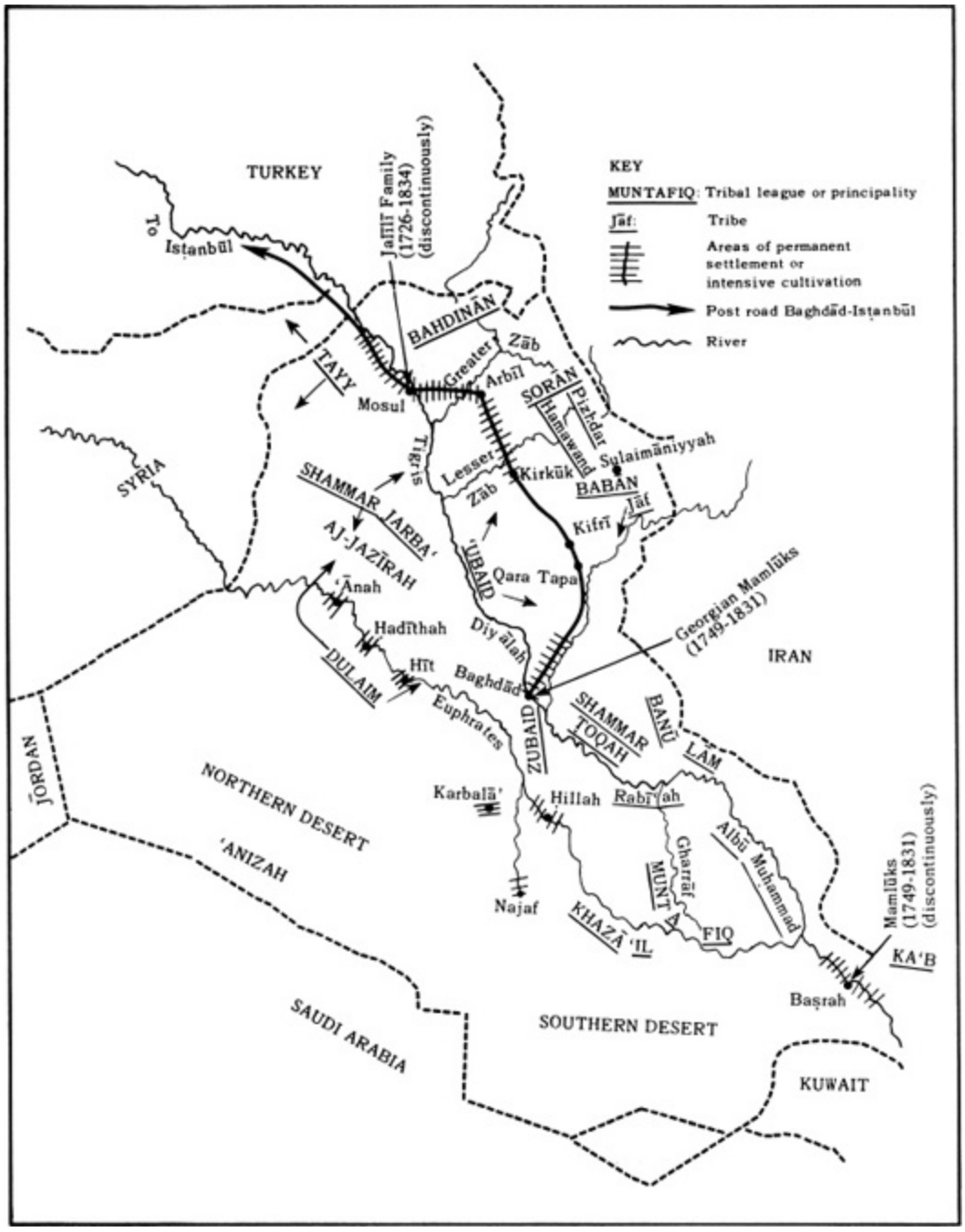
By virtue of the decline of urban influence–a phenomenon prolonged by a series of invasions from Central Asia and, after the Turkish conquest of the sixteenth century, by the recurring Ottoman-Persian wars–and in consequence of the vagrancies of the rivers, the silting up of old canals, the neglect of drainage, and the spread of salination, a three-fold pattern of life came to characterize the flatlands of Iraq. Small areas of permanent settlement–riverine cities and towns with farms and palm gardens clinging close to them–led abruptly into the in-security of the larger intermediate semisettled communal domain of the riverine shaikh and his tribesmen. Pressing in on both these areas was the vast purely nomadic realm of the restless desert. In the northeast–in the mountains and valleys of Kurdistan–where cultivation depended upon irregular and inadequate rain and not on irrigation, as in the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, but where insecurity was as pervasive, the same pattern of settled, semisettled, and nomadic areas was reproduced, the pressure here emanating from the montane nomads.

The characteristic feature of this pattern–particularly in the flat-lands–was its instability. Hardly any tribe remained for very long in the same position. One reason was the perennial state of raids and counter-raids. Occasionally a sudden outburst of nomadic energy from the interior of the desert would set on the move all the tribes in its path, and would bring a new tribal distribution in the river valleys. Then there were the vagaries of the loose rivers: a drying up of a river branch, for example, would dispossess, fragment, and disperse whole tribes.

This state of things had by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century led to the ethnologic tribal configuration delineated in the rough in the accompanying sketch[3] [Map 2],

MAP 2

Sketch of Tribal Leagues and Principalities in Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century



As is clear from the sketch, the areas of settled life and intensive agriculture were restricted to the water-wheel region on the Euphrates around the towns of Hīt, Ḥadīthah, and ‘Ānah, to the Khāliṣ valley, the lower Diyālah, the Ḥillah Shaṭṭ,[4] the fertile lands between Kirkūk, Arbīl, and Mosul adjacent to the protected post road to Isṭanbūl, and finally to both shores of the Shaṭṭ-il-‘Arab in the neighborhood of Baṣrah. To these areas alone extended, and not always continuously, the real authority of the

rulers seated in the main towns–the Mamlūk Pashas of Baghdād, their Mutasallims[5] at Baṣrah and Kirkūk, and the Jalīlī family of Mosul, who owed formal allegiance to the Ottoman Porte. Elsewhere was the preserve of largely autonomous tribal or tribally based power. In the Kurdish montane country to the east of the post road, the Bābāns, centered on Sulaimāniyyah, ruled between the Diyālah and the Lesser Zāb,[6] the Sorāns between the Lesser Zāb and the Greater Zāb,[7] and the Bahdināns in the mountains to the north and northeast of Mosul.[8] In the Arab flatlands, Banī Lām's influence extended from Qurnah to the eastern shore of the Diyālah river;[9] Shammar Ṭōgah had its tents on the Tigris to the south of Baghdād; Khazā'il dominated the middle Euphrates,[10] Muntafiq the Gharrāf and the lower Euphrates;[11] Zubaid occupied the right bank of the Tigris to the south of the Diyālah and the left bank of the Euphrates to the north and south of Ḥillah;[12] Dulaim ranged on both sides of the upper middle Euphrates;[13] 'Ubaid was on the upper middle Tigris;[14] Tayy lived to the north of Mosul; and Shammar Jarba' wandered within hail of this city and in the Jazīrah.[15]

What were the main characteristics of these tribal confederations? To begin with, the link between their constituent elements was loose, and the sense of confederacy not sustained. For example, the Muntafiq, which was one of the more powerful semisettled tribal leagues, was composed of three tribal divisions–the Banī Mālik, Ajwād, and Banī Saī'd–which were not tribes but tribal groups, and themselves included minor confederations such as the Banī Khaikān and the Mujarraḥ within the Banī Mālik tribe-group.[16] The unrelenting strife between the latter confederations[17] indicates how tenuous was the unity of the Muntafiq. There were similar bloody encounters among the equally unstable Banī Lām tribal league.[18] Ṭayy was also torn by internal dissensions.[19] Within Shammar the great factions were grouped together under the title of *ṣāyiḥ*,[20] and were generally at feud with the dominant Jarba'.[21] The tribes of Mīr Yūsufī and Mīr Maḥmalī, which were tributaries of the Bābāns, were recurrently raiding each other,[22] and at the center of this principality divisions were so rampant that one of its greatest chiefs was deposed no fewer than five times between 1789 and 1813.[23]

The confederations cohered only under external threat or when a joint foray was in prospect. This points to their basic nature and function: they

were *confederations for war*. Their raison d'être was war and defence. Denis de Rivoyre, who visited the Muntafiq in the second half of the nineteenth century, observed that with the tribes everything was "established and combined with a view to war. The social organization is above all a military organization."[24]

Naturally enough, within the confederations military valor was highly valued and the fighter-tribesman was at a premium. Political supremacy tended also to pass to a stratum that had the capacities bearing on war. In many instances this stratum appears to have originated from a particular group of tribesmen. Iraq's Arab tribes, it will be remembered, were divided into People of the Camel, *ahl-ul-ibl;* People of the Sheep, *shāwiyah;* cultivators, *ḥarrāthah* or *falālīḥ;* and buffalo-breeding Marshdwellers, *ma'dān*. These divisions were not always clear-cut, as cultivators might have also been breeders of sheep or buffaloes. At any rate, the People of the Camel regarded all the other groups with the same undiscriminating contempt, and refused to give their daughters in marriage even to their leading families.[25] From their point of view, any manner of living other than that of bearing arms was unworthy and shameful. Being more mobile and possessed of superior fighting qualities, they were often able to assert their dominance in the tribal world. Thus the 'Amārāt, the leading division of Rabī'ah, descended from 'Anizah,[26] which belonged to the People of the Camel and was noted for its military prowess. The Sa'dūns, who ruled over the Muntafiq, were, like 'Anizah, People of the Camel, and as militarily distinguished. As late as 1919 they showed up in the river valleys only to collect their rents, and then went off to the desert, wandering about hunting and hawking with their camels.[27] They did the very same thing in 1765, but then to gather in the "tribute," and this they carried out with "great rigor."[28] Many of the half-settled tribes that they dominated, were, it is true, like themselves immigrants from Arabia, but of an earlier date, and had become more intimately connected with the riverine tradition. Again, Shammar Jarba' and Banī Lām, which lived on exactions from sheep-breeding or other riverine tribes, or from levies upon caravans, were of the order of the People of the Camel.[29] So were also the ruling sections of Khazā'il and Zubaid, who had lordship over shepherd and peasant-tribesmen in the mid-Euphrates and mid-Tigris.[30]

Obviously, the cultivators in the tribal society of those days–who lived in "miserable huts" and paid "tribute" to the camel-owning desert lords[31]–were members of weaker or subdued tribes. Even as observed in 1918, the Khazā'il proper consisted of septs of one family, and each sept had, in addition to servants and dependants, a group of cultivators, many of whom were of non-Khazā'il origin.[32] Similarly, the powerful Tigris tribe of Albū Muḥammad, whose chiefs descended from Zubaid, employed in 1917 members of weaker tribes[33] in its wheat areas and for the heavier labors of reaping and threshing in its rice fields.[34] Again, the Banī Mālik, who lived by fishing, or by tilling the soil, or by the breeding of buffaloes, or the weaving of reed mats, were in the same year scattered all over: they worked on the Euphrates for the Sa'dūns, they cultivated the winter crops on the estates of the shaikhs of Albū Muḥammad on the lower Tigris, and there were large bodies of them in the Ḥawaizah marshes near the Persian frontier.[35] This dispersal, which might have partly been due to the caprice of the rivers, was also a testimony to their weakness.

The peasants were identified by the dominant tribes in some areas as *radd* or *mawālī*–"clients"–and kept in check by the *zilim*, the armed retainers of the ruling shaikh.[36] It is not without interest in this connection that the chiefs of the Albū Muḥammad developed in the first half of the nineteenth century a standing armed force and, with the help of two smiths from Baghdād, fitted it with twenty-one cannons, and forbade the peasants and other tribesmen under their control to carry arms.[37]

In the light of the preceding observations, it should be maintained that, though in the heyday of their power the tribal confederations were basically organized with a view to war and defence, and that emergencies could have occasioned a tribal levée en masse, it nonetheless does not appear to have been invariably true that in the tribes "everybody was a soldier,"[38] as was the case among the Muntafiq sections that Denis de Rivoyre visited.

The ascendancy of warriors over cultivators appears to have marked also the societies of the Kurdish mountain belt. According to C. J. Rich of the East India Company, who toured the area in 1820-1821, the people of Kurdistan were divided into warrior tribesmen and an inferior nontribal peasant caste called *gorān* or *ra'iyyah* (subjects) or *Kelowspee* (White Caps). The clansmen rarely, if ever, put their hand to the plough. For their part, the peasants, whose condition "much resembles that of Negro slaves in

the West Indies," were never soldiers and, though speaking a Kurdish dialect, were thought to be, as noted elsewhere, racially distinct from the clansmen.[39]

The reigning family of the Sorān principality sprang, it goes without saying, from the clannish Kurds, and belonged to the mounted, originally nomadic Pizhdar,[40] one of the most powerful of Kurdish tribes. The Bābāns appear also to have been related to the Pizhdar. For one thing, they originated in the Pizhdar country, and before their rise to a pashaliq had been the "feudal chiefs" of this tribe under the Sorāns.[41] For another thing, the dominant families of Pizhdar claim the same ancestor as the Bābāns, Aḥmad-ul-Faqīh,[42] who was said to have made his mark in the seventeenth century as a military leader, and to have been awarded villages by the Turks for helping them in a war.[43]

The origin of the Bahdinān family is obscure. The Kurds regarded it as something sacred, and local tradition traced its descent to the caliphs of Baghdād. Its princes affected the manners of the later 'Abbāsids, some of them always sitting alone and veiling themselves when riding out. But they did not have, at least in 1820, much say politically.[44] Real power apparently belonged to the chiefs of the "warlike" clans–the Barwari, Mizuri, Doshki, and Raikan–who provided the soldiers of the principality and dominated peasants which, incidentally, in this region were not of Kurdish stock but Assyrians or Nestorians.[45] The state of these peasants did not differ much from that of others of their class in the rest of Kurdistan.

By and large the Arab tribal cultivator, unlike the Kurdish peasant, had not by this time lapsed into a condition of semiserfdom. The scouring or silting of the rivers, the flooding or salination of the lands, and the tribal raids tended to disperse or unbalance the Arab tribes more frequently, thus endowing the cultivator with considerable mobility. This, and the scantiness of his numbers in comparison with the amount of cultivable land, saved him from serfdom but not, of course, from an inferior social status.

We may now clinch an essential point: it is the fighting nomadic order that tended to provide the ruling stratum of Kurdish princes and aghas; and of Arab *shaikhs al-mashāyikh*–the chiefs of chiefs–that is, the heads of the confederations; and shaikhs of the powerful constituent tribes; and it is partly to the distinction between the fighter-nomad and the often nonrelated

cultivator that we may ascribe the beginnings of the social cleavage within the tribal domain as we find it in the period of the monarchy.

It is time to turn to another aspect of the tribal societies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: the *dīrah* and its underlying principle of communal ownership.

In the Iraqi flatlands, each constituent tribe of the confederation had a *dīrah*, that is, an area of land which it habitually occupied or which was its preserve as long as it could defend it. If the tribe was weak, it could not, of course, forbid a powerful shaikh from taking his grazing in its *dīrah* freely,[46] but on the whole its right to its accustomed arable, grazing, or living grounds was prescriptive and recognized by tribal tradition.

The *dīrah*, which was collectively owned, consisted largely of lands used for pasture, and was divided among the various sections of the tribe.[47] The cultivated portion was either held in common, or as much as one-half or as little as one-fifth of it retained by the shaikh, and the rest allotted to the various heads of families. The land was not owned by these heads of families in the sense that ownership is understood today. It was, so to say, committed to their charge with a view to the good of the entire tribe. Similarly, the holding of the shaikh did not attach to his person but to his function, and was actually the share of the *muḍīf*[48] (literally, the guest-house),[49] which was the political and social center of the tribe.[50] This share belonged in effect to what Rivoyre called "le fond commun"[51]–the common tribal fund. The head of the confederation, the *shaikh-al-mashāyikh*, had no direct connection with the cultivated land, but received a share of the produce as tribute or, where he could not completely escape the authority of the Mamlūk Pashas, fulfilled the function of a *multazim* or tax farmer.

In Kurdistan the nomadic tribes had their own prescriptive grazing grounds, but the lands in the villages were either in the hands of tribal aghas, who were their own masters,[52] or held–theoretically–for life by the reigning Kurdish families on that kind of heritable feudal tenure which was conditional–again in theory–upon their providing so many men to the Ottomans or Mamlūk Pashas for military service when called upon.[53] These families, in turn, apportioned the best lands among their trusted followers or, more specifically, among the aghas or the "Beyzādehs," that is, "the gentlemen of the first rank."[54]

In practice, on account of the generally unsettled political conditions there was at this time no real security in tenure of land, whether in the Kurdish zone or in the Arab areas, a factor which made for the prevalence of subsistence agriculture. As one tribal agha, a vassal of the Bābāns, put it in 1820:

> Why should I . . . throw a *tghār*[55] of seed into the ground when I am not sure that my master will hold his government, and I my estate, until the season of harvest? Instead of doing this, I allow the peasants to cultivate my estate as they may find it convenient and I take from them my due, which is the *zakār* or tenth of the whole and as much more as I can squeeze out of them by any means and on any pretext.[56]

But the subsistence character of the agricultural economy of the time was also due to the poor communications and the fact that the idea of profit was essentially alien to the tribes.

It remains to bring out that in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the shaikh in the river valleys and the agha in the mountain belt served a social function. They were needed. Partly they themselves created that need but, by reason of the weakness of the cities, they alone could in that insecure period provide protection. The tribe, in other words, was in the countryside the only organized social group that could shield from harm, and if harm befell, could exact retribution for it. Even the people of the small country towns enrolled themselves as members of the nearest tribe, though they were not in any way related to it.[57] To the tribal peasant, the tribe and the shaikh were, of course, a necessity. He could not survive without them. But when the cities stood again on their feet and began themselves to provide the needed security, and the shaikh, once a protector, became an economic burden, there arose the question of whether this remnant of a past and different age had not become an historical irrelevancy. To see how this came about let us now turn to a new page in the history of the shaikh.

In the nineteenth century, new forces came to disturb the shaikh, shatter his isolation, decompose his military leagues, and undermine his self-

sufficient communal domain.

The new forces had their source ultimately in the increasing entanglement of the Ottoman Empire in the meshes of the world of capitalism, but more immediately in the ensuing spirit of change that had taken hold of Isṭanbūl and that brought in its wake the extinction of the Janis-saries[58] in 1826, the establishment of a new conscripted army, the end of the virtually independent Georgian Mamlūk dynasty of Baghdād in 1831, the reincorporation of the Iraq province into the parent empire, the new land laws of 1858, steam navigation on the Tigris, telegraphic communications, the centralized *wilāyah*[59] system, the dynamic and enterprising governor of Baghdād Midḥat Pasha (1869-1871), and the Young Turk Revolution of 1908.

The shaikh felt all this in the direct pressure by the Turkish government to break his position and destroy the cohesion of his tribe, and in the indirect but far more potent influence of remoter forces–those of the world market–brought near to him by the new river communications.

The Turkish tribal policy was based on the principle of division: fostering rivalries in the ruling house of the *shaikh al-mashāyikh*, pitting against the latter and against each other the shaikhs of the constituent tribes and of other extraneous tribes, ignoring the shaikhs al-together and dealing directly with the chiefs[60] of tribal sections. In the pursuit of this policy the Turks made use of a very effective weapon: the land.

According to the Ottoman conception, all the land, apart from some *mulk*[61] and *waqf*[62] holdings, was *mīrī*, that is, belonged to the state. Its effective occupiers held it, in theory, under lease from the ruling authority. In 1858 a new land code embodied this conception, but at the same time introduced a new kind of tenure, known as *ṭāpū*, by providing, with the retention of the right of ultimate ownership of the land by the state, for the grant of a legal and heritable right of usufructuary possession to individuals.

The new code arose from the same determination that marked tribal policy in Iraq and that sought to Ottomanize the tribal world: that is, to strengthen the central Ottoman administration at the expense of shaikhly power. For this purpose the code provided a new means: the creation from among the tribesmen of a large number of small landowners. But things turned out differently in practice, although the Turks went far in undermining tribalism.

Thus from about the middle of the nineteenth century, the Turks succeeded in obtaining a hold over the powerful Muntafiq confederation by setting the dominant Sa‘dūns against one another and farming out the Muntafiq country to the highest bidder among them. At one point they tried to take away a large chunk of the lands under their control, but had to abandon this course. Finally, in 1871, their great governor Midḥat Pasha induced a number of Sa‘dūn chiefs to accept the new Ottomanizing policy. The bait was their conversion from mere tribute-receiving shaikhs into regular *ṭāpū* holders of the lands of the Muntafiq tribes.[63] This split the Sa‘dūns family into Ottomanizers and exponents of the old tribal principles. But much more serious was the implicit dispossession of the rank-and-file tribesmen from the land in which they had a communal tribal right, and their conversion into mere tenants. Thus vast areas of land supporting many tribes became in effect the fiefs of the Sa‘dūns who, with the advance of cultivation, grew very wealthy on their rents until about the turn of the century, when their tribesmen acquired large numbers of modern rifles and gradually refused to pay anything. The Sa‘dūns now split up the tribes, leasing the land to each small sectional chief independently of the head shaikh. In this manner they were able to collect a fraction of their rents until a few years before the First World War, when many of the tribesmen declined payment altogether.[64] The working of all these forces had the effect of fracturing the Muntafiq confederation into numerous mutually hostile tribes, themselves decomposing into a multitude of independent sections and subsections.

Ottoman initiative also led to the breaking of the power of the Khazā‘il, “the kings of the Middle Euphrates,” although the drying up in the 1880s of the Ḥillah Shaṭṭ, on which they had much of their cultivation, contributed to their decline. By Ottoman command the most celebrated Khazā‘il chief, Shaikh Dhirb, was poisoned at Najaf, and his great grandson, Mit’ib, at Mosul.[65] More than that, the Ottomans weaned several of the local tribe-groups from their loyalty to their old overlords, and brought in extraneous *sādah*[66] and tribes–al-Fatlah, among others–and settled them on the territory of the Khazā‘il. This, as could be imagined, led to recurrent intertribal conflicts.[67] The *sādah*, for their part, attracted peasants from every clan to work permanently on their new estates, thereby splitting them away from their parent units.[68] No attempt appears to have been made by the Turks to

introduce the *ṭāpū* system into this region. Legally the land remained *mīrī*, the shaikhs and *sādah* holding it, in theory, under lease; but inasmuch as the Turks were not powerful enough to maintain a continuous presence in an area so distant from Baghdād, they were seldom able to collect the usual *mīrī* share.[69] In the main, therefore, the result of their efforts was the supersession of the old Khazā‘il confederacy by a few virtually autonomous large landholders, shaikhs, and *sādah*. However, some tribal chiefs in the Shāmiyyah district, unable to look after their huge tracts, and apprehensive that the government might grant the uncultivated portions to others, parceled them out among the headmen of the different sections of their tribes. As it happened, many of the latter, or of their descendants, were or in time became their own cultivators on their own lands.[70] Hence arose in this district what for Iraq was and largely remained until 1958 an exceptional phenomenon: the peasant landholder.

The fate of the Banī Lām was milder than that of the Khazā‘il, but Banī Lām lost its influence over the Albū Muḥammad and the other tribes of the ‘Amārah area. The agricultural lands, which had once suffered from its exactions, became after 1883 *saniyyah*, that is, the personal property of the Ottoman sultan,[71] who, however, found it impracticable to lease his estates to any but the shaikhly stratum. On the other hand, the authority of this stratum was weakened by frequent redistribution of the estates between the various members of the dominant tribal families. This excited bitter jealousies, forestalled shaikhly combinations, but gave rise to ceaseless disturbance.[72]

Divisions also overtook Zubaid, Dulaim, and, to a lesser extent, the Shammar confederation. Their component tribes and main sections tended to become virtually independent.[73]

In the Kurdish belt, the principalities of Bahdinān, Sorān, and Bābān were destroyed between 1837 and 1852,[74] but Ottoman rule remained tenuous, and real power fell to the aghas and begs of the constituent tribes and the chiefs of the mystic paths. Into the same hands passed also the bulk of the land in this area.[75] More often than not, the *ṭāpū* records were compiled, as one British political officer put it, “by corrupt ma’*mūrs*,[76] who rarely left their office, at the dictation of aghas whose greed outweighed all other considerations.”[77]

More far-reaching than the actions of the Turks was the impact on the shaikhs and their leagues of the use of steamers on the Tigris. Most affected, particularly after the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, were the tribes on the lower section of the river and on the Shaṭṭ-il-ʻArab. By the end of the nineteenth century, the subsistence economy of these tribes had to no little degree given way to a market-oriented economy. The shaikh, who hitherto had had limited opportunities to exploit his tribesmen, began in his new status as *ṭāpū* or leaseholder to view them in a new way, that is, as a source of profit. The tribal peasant became of greater worth to him than the fighter-tribesman. Fortunately for the peasant, he was not tied to the soil. When unhappy, he moved to the service of another shaikh or to the lands of nonresident landlords from Baṣrah, or sought work in the new town of ʻAmārah[78] or in the city of Baṣrah itself, so that there developed the unfamiliar phenomenon of big shaikhs competing against each other for peasants. This led to the intermixture of tribes and to increasing instances of shaikhs landlording alien tribesmen. It was also possible now for individual peasants, particularly in Baṣrah province, to sell their share of the produce and buy their own needs from the local market, when previously exchange of tribal produce occurred only through the shaikh. Similar processes developed in country districts neighboring Baghdād and a number of other towns so that here, as in parts of Baṣrah province, riverine peasants bore allegiance to no shaikh, and the territorial rather than the tribal connection was predominant.[79]

The legacy of the Turks was, therefore, a tribal system generally enfeebled and, on the Shaṭṭ-il-ʻArab and in areas adjacent to the cities, in a state of advanced decomposition. The decline of the political and military power of the shaikhs, aghas, and begs was unmistakable. The military confederations and principalities were destroyed. In their place arose a multitude of antagonistic tribes and tribal sections. In Baghdād Wilāyat alone–one of the three wilayāts of which Iraq was constituted–there were in 1918 at least 110 independent tribes, made up of 1186 sections.[80] Many of these sections were practically free from the authority of the parent tribe. On the other hand, the groundwork was laid for the economic growth of the shaikhs and aghas by the granting or leasing to them or the registering in their name, through fraud or bribery, of vast estates supporting many tribes or whole villages, tribal and nontribal, in utter disregard of the prescriptive

right of rank and file tribesmen or nontribal cultivators. This new economic power of the shaikhs and aghas was, however, in its essence a concealed threat to their very historical existence, for it was alienating them from the only real source of their power: their tribe. It was substituting for the life-renewing patriarchal and blood relationships–where these existed-the new subversive relationships of production. This ultimately was to lead to the undoing of the shaikhs and aghas.

The history of the shaikhs, as traced thus far, reveals that powerful shaikhs–and this applies *pari passu* to begs and aghas–were a concomitance of weak cities; and that, inversely, the growth of cities involved the political decline of the shaikhs. A despoiled and helpless Baghdād, river works in ruin, transport by pack animals or rope-drawn boats, an inanimate and faltering trade, a middle class dying out–in such conditions the shaikh throve, his pastures spread, and his laws and lawlessness held sway. But the first stirrings of Baghdād, the determination of a few spirited Ottoman governors, a small number of iron steamers–often on irregular river sailings–constantly interrupted telegraphic lines, and a revived but as yet restricted trade were enough by the early years of the twentieth century to unbalance the shaikh and, in the more accessible areas, to disperse and decompose his tribe. When we come, however, to the period 1917-1958–and more particularly 1941-1958–we encounter an unusual phenomenon: a Baghdād throbbing with a vigor long unknown, a middle class in continuous growth and already intensely articulate, a modern education still meager in content but extending in bounds, paved roads, railroads, and air services gradually spanning more and more of the country, a commerce still hesitant but in a lively mood–all this coexisted with a newly born, artificially isolated structure of vast semifeudal estates, where the enfeebled shaikh of a few decades earlier now ruled practically unchallenged as landlord, *producing for a market*, and as absolute master of a peasantry by this time depressed to a condition resembling serfhood. In other words, the circumstances–the development of towns, of the central government, of commerce, and of communications–that, in the nature of things, should have hastened the downfall of the shaikh, were on the contrary attended by the growth of a new *commercial* shaikhly semifeudalism. What accounts for this unnatural result, for what in essence is a reversal of history? Before

providing an explanation, it is appropriate to draw a number of distinctions with respect to the stratum of shaikhs and aghas, and to cast a look at the structure of their rule.

The tribal chiefs of the period 1917-1958 could be differentiated in a number of ways.

In the first place, there were those to whose leadership a religious significance was attached and who, though commanding tribes, did not, as a rule, stand in any blood relationship to them. They were either *sādah* or "guides" of mystic brotherhoods, or combined the one capacity and the other. The tribal *sādah* abounded in the Arab Shīʿī areas, particularly in the mid-Euphrates, and are given attention elsewhere.[81] Chiefs of mystic paths, enjoying authority over tribes, were confined to the Kurdish belt. To this category belonged, for example, Shaikh Aḥmad of Barzān and Shaikh Maḥmūd of Barzinjah. Shaikh Aḥmad, brother of Mulla Muṣṭafa al-Barzānī, leader of the Kurdish revolution of the sixties and seventies, owed his tribal influence to the ascendancy that his family had exercised for more than a century over the adherents of the Naqshbandī mystic order[82] in the mountain villages above the east bank of the Greater Zāb. Shaikh Maḥmūd, who was also regarded with great religious veneration, descended from a family of *sādah*, which had long provided the leaders of the Qadīrī dervish community of Sulaimāniyyah, and was at the same time Sulaimāniyyah's biggest landowner and, in 1918-1919 and for a time in the twenties, the paramount chief of its tribes. Subsequently, however, he lost much of his tribal power.[83]

In the second place, landed tribal chiefs were differentiable into a number of types, not necessarily mutually exclusive, namely, into (a) leaders of tribal freeholding farmers; (b) owners of estates or village land tenanted by sharecropping peasants from their own tribes; (c) shaikhs owning estates tilled partly or largely by *mawālī* or *radd*, that is, by client or extraneous tribesmen; and (d) aghas possessing village land cultivated by nontribal serf-like *miskīns* ("miserables"). The first type of chiefship, which was of infrequent occurrence, rested on kinship, and approached the patriarchal ideal. The authority of the third type of tribal leaders, which grew out of ties of patronship or ties essentially economic in character, could be very arbitrary; but most oppressive was the power of the agha of a *miskīn* village, which was likened by one British political officer to that of "the

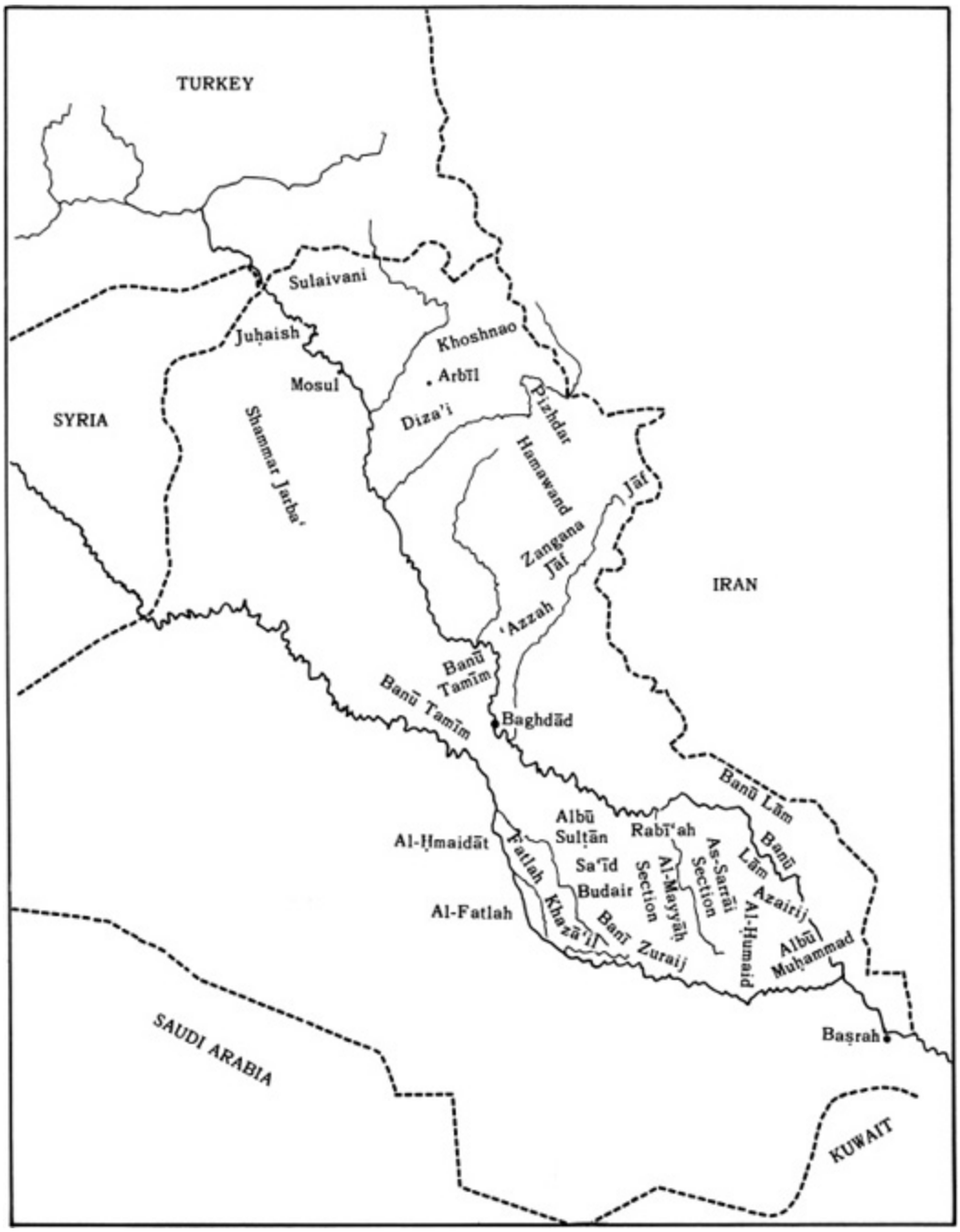
English feudal baron in the time of Stephen."[84] The other tribal chiefs, while beneficiaries of cheap labor, were less of an affliction. However, the basic general tendency was for shaikhships to develop sooner or later along quasi feudal lines. As the British government noted in 1931 in a special report to the League of Nations, "patriarchal tribal government, once the nomad life is abandoned, tends to become a feudal state in which the overlord alone derives benefit from the change."[85]

In the third place, a meaningful distinction could be made between tribal chiefs in terms of the size of the *muqāṭa'ahs* or estates that they overlorded. From this standpoint, the biggest were the heads of the families of al-Yāwer of the tribe of Shammar aj-Jarba', al-Amīr of Banī" Rabī'ah, al-Yāsīn of Mayyāḥ, al-Qaṣṣāb of as-Sarrāi,[86] and aj-Jaryān of Albū Sulṭān,[87] each of whom owned in 1958 more than 100,000 dūnums of land (see Table 4-2). Also important were the families of Begzādah of the Jāf tribe,[88] al-Farḥān of Shammar aj-Jarba', and as-Sa'dūns, ex-chiefs of the Muntafiq. For the areas owned by these families, turn to Table 5-3. No less significant was another stratum of big shaikhs who were not landowners, but holders under lease of vast tracts of state land. To this stratum belonged the principal shaikhs of Albū Muḥammad, al-Azairij, and Banī Lām. For the size of their landholdings in 1951, consult Table 6-13.

As is clear from the geographic location of the tribes that were subject to their power (see Map 3), big shaikhdoms characterized the lower Tigris, the Gharrāf, the Ḥillah Branch of the mid-Euphrates, and the Sinjār district of the province of Mosul, that is, regions which had been relatively recently restored to cultivation,[89] or which had not had a very close concentration of settled people.

MAP 3

Tribes Mentioned in Table 5-3 and in Chapter 6



As noteworthy is the apparent direct correlation between political quiescence and big shaikhdoms: with few exceptions, the big landed shaikhs and begs or, to be more historically accurate, the shaikhs and begs that became big landowners under the monarchy, had provided a shaikhly anchor for British policy during and after the years of the British occupation, taking no part in the Iraqi uprising of 1920 or in the subsequent movement against the “Mandate.” They also had no share in the tribal

rebellions of 1935-1937. This is in marked contrast to the majority of the smaller shaikhs[90] of the Hindiyyah and Shāmiyyah Branches of the middle Euphrates and of the lower reaches of this river, who formed the backbone of the anti-British movement and of the risings of the thirties. However, some of the shaikhs of the Ḥillah Shaṭṭ who would later become large landholders participated in the 1920 events but, as the then British civil commissioner brought out, they "mostly followed their tribesmen rather than led them."[91]

The explanation for the fact just mentioned is to be sought in yet another element that differentiated among tribal chiefs: the powerful influence that the Shī'ī *'ulamā'* of Najaf and Karbalā' exercised, particularly in the twenties, over the rank-and-file tribesmen of the middle and lower Euphrates, which made it difficult for the shaikhs of these regions– irrespective of their status–to ignore clerical injunctions. The shaikhs of other Arab areas, including the Shī'ī shaikhs of the Tigris and the Gharrāf, were far less susceptible to pressures from the religious class.

A characteristic that was shared by a large number of the smaller Shāmiyyah and Hindiyyah shaikhs and the big Albū Muḥammad shaikhs on the Tigris was rice growing, and the seemingly attendant extreme autocratic authority over their peasants. The reason for this extremism was probably the severe life that rice cultivation imposes and the organized labor and constant attention that it requires.

One thing the big shaikhs of the Gharrāf and the small shaikhs of the lower Euphrates had in common was that a large part of the lands that their tribes occupied was held in *ṭāpū* by the absentee Sa'dūns family–a legacy, as we have seen, from Turkish times. They were now obliged by order of the government to hand over to the Sa'dūns a share of the produce of the land as rent.[92] This came to be less of an annoyance to the big shaikhs of the Gharrāf as they acquired extensive areas in their own names and encroached unhindered on state lands.

One remaining significant point was the greater likelihood of literacy among the tribal chiefs of the Shāmiyyah and Hindiyyah Shaṭṭs than among those of other regions. This was in all probability due to the closeness of the former to the holy city of Najaf, which had been for long a center of Shī'ī learning. At least one of the Shāmiyyah chiefs wrote a book,[93] which on the part of a shaikh is an extraordinary performance.

How was an Arab shaikhly *muqāṭa‘ah* or estate[94] organized? To begin with, there were differences in organization from one region to another, but they were not great. Moreover, the bigger shaikhs owned or held several estates which were, however, as a rule, contiguous. Of course, the *muqāṭa‘ah* was tribally based, and the first authority in it was the shaikh. His title and rank were transmissible to heirs, but not necessarily by primogeniture, the ruling family usually selecting from among its members the man deemed most qualified to command.[95] In bygone years the shaikh’s position was to a lesser or greater degree circumscribed by tribal custom, but as the bonds between him and his tribesmen weakened, and from being patriarchal became essentially economic, tribal tradition gave way more and more to his arbitrary will. At the same time he began to rely increasingly on his *ḥūshiyyah*,[96] that is, his private armed guard. This development differed in intensity from province to province, and tended to be more pronounced in *muqāṭa‘ahs* where much of the agricultural work was done by extraneous or client tribes or tribal fragments. “Shaikhs,” wrote in 1921 the British political officer of the ‘Amārah division, “have on more than one occasion told me that in order to maintain law and order among their tribesmen they must thoroughly frighten them, mitigating this treatment by occasional rewards.”[97] Significantly, when, on the outburst of the 1920 revolt, the British abandoned the Muntafiq, the paramount shaikhs of the province left with them. The shaikhs, who until then had, in the words of a British divisional adviser, “been bolstered up by British gold and British bayonets,” did not return until British troops again marched through their territory.[98] Similarly, in 1922, when the authority of the Baghdād government had to be temporarily withdrawn from some areas of Dīwāniyyah, the tribal chiefs, left to their own devices, could no longer command the respect of their tribesmen.[99] Such situations enhanced the value of the *ḥūshiyyah* in the eyes of the shaikh, and tended to lend to this institution a clearly coercive character.

The *ḥūshiyyah’s* function was to guard the shaikh, execute his will, supervise his peasants, and protect his properties. More often than not, its members were recruited from outside the shaikh’s own tribe, and were regarded by him as his slaves.[100] In some cases, they were murderers or perpetrators of other crimes who, fleeing justice, took refuge with the tribe

and attached themselves to the shaikh.[101] The strength of the *ḥūshiyyah* differed according to the shaikh's means and the status of his relations with his tribesmen or peasants. In 1917 the amīr of Rabī'ah, whose tribe counted between 2,200 and 3,000 men, had a *ḥūshiyyah* of 250 horsemen.[102] In 1944 the *ḥūshiyyah* of Muḥammad al-'Araibī, shaikh of Albū Muḥammad, numbered 552 men, and his tribesmen a little over 5,000.[103] In 1958 'All Sha'lān of Khazā'il commanded a *ḥūshiyyah* of 98 men and a tribe of about 4,000.[104] Within the *ḥūshiyyah* there were gradations. Some of its members tended to rise above others in the favor of the shaikh, and were known to be particularly devoted to his person. They, therefore, received higher rewards and were in effect the elite of the *ḥūshiyyah*. They were necessarily limited in number. Of the scale of their income we do not have an exact idea. According to a 1944 report by the Mutasarrif[105] of 'Amārah province, the 552 men of the *ḥūshiyyah* of Shaikh al-'Araibī were paid for their services in two ways: 308 received a total of 603 tons of rice, and the remainder had been granted lands amounting to 2,175 dūnums, each holding a plot corresponding to his rank. These lands were not tilled by them but by the peasants of the shaikh, and incurred no "feudal" charges. The latter group was obviously better rewarded, but itself embraced a small, favored upper crust.[106] The *ḥūshiyyah* was also differentiated with respect to function. Some of its members, for example, had the odious task of inflicting bodily punishment. Others, the *dawāfī*, had charge of the boats of the shaikh and his family. Still others, the *shiḥniyyah*, guarded the crop during the harvest season and received extra bonuses for their vigilance.[107] In some tribes, such as the 'Azzah which lived in the Diyalah country on the Khāliṣ canal, the *shiḥniyyah* or *shiḥnah*, as they were also called, were temporary foot guardsmen drawn from the peasantry and distinguishable from the shaikh's permanent mounted guard, known in this region as the *charkhachīs*.[108]

One unavoidable man on the shaikh's domain, and usually the most trusted of his attendants, was the *qahwajī* or coffeemaker, who had responsibility for the *muḍīf*, which was not merely the tribal guest-house, but also the center from which the shaikh administered his estate.

In some areas, the second most important tribal personage after the shaikh was *al-farīḍah al-'ārifah* (literally, "the knowing ordinance"), a spiritual man of sorts, who was learned in the tradition of the tribe and helped the shaikh in settling matters in dispute. He was treated with special

deference, and showered with shaikhly gifts. The shaikh tried to achieve through him what he could not secure through his *ḥūshiyyah*– a willing acquiescence by his tribesmen in his rule.

In the Shī'ī country there was in certain tribal villages a religious figure with a more or less regularized authority: the *mūman*, who was usually a graduate of a religious school, and acted as the agent of the chief *mujtahid* of Najaf, the supreme religious leader of the Shī'ī sect.[109] However, some of the *mūmans*, in particular the itinerant sort, were cheats and lived off the peasantry.

It remains to bring out that the shaikhly estate was divided into a number of units called *shabbahs*, differing in size in different districts, and that each *shabbah* had a *sirkāl*[110]–a corruption of the Persian *sirkār* (literally, "a supervisor of work"). The *sirkāls* had direct charge of cultivation, and sometimes labored on the land side by side with the peasants. Usually they were the heads of the tribal sections, and either rented the land from the shaikh and operated it somewhat independently or simply, and in return for a share of the produce, were mere agents of the shaikh.

If the effective unit in the Arab tribal countryside was the tribally based estate, in the Kurdish belt it was the village or *gund* which, as a rule, clustered around a water source. The wealthier tribal begs or aghas owned, it goes without saying, numerous villages. As in the case of the Arab shaikhs, their position, though hereditary, did not always pass to the first-born. Again, like the bigger Arab shaikhs, they had their guest-house–the *dīwān-khānah;* their coffee-maker–the *qahwajī;* and their retainers–the *pyshtmala* (literally, "the support of the house"). In some instances, the Kurdish chieftain's house attendants, the *khulām*,[111] were distinguished from the attendants who accompanied him when he rode out, and who were called *ḍhalām*.[112] The beg's or agha's villages were also not without their *mullah*, the leader of the local mosque, and their dervishes or mystic friars. But here, as in the Arab shaikhly estate, it was the men directly responsible for cultivation–the *sirkārs*, or the *kökhas*, that is, the chiefs of sections of the peasant clans, or the headmen of the *miskīns*– and, of course, more so the peasants, that were the real producers and real representatives of agrarian interests.[113]

It is time to revert to the question that has been left unanswered: how were the enfeebled shaikhs and aghas of the last decades of the Turkish period able under the monarchy to expand and strengthen their feudal-like grip over their peasants, or to turn their once free-living tribesmen into sharecropping semiserfs in the shadow of a growing city life and an ascending central government?

An incomplete but basic explanation is that a new and extraneous force–the British–entered in 1914 the conflict between the cities and the tribal chiefs depicted in preceding pages, and threw the weight of its influence on the side of the shaikhs and aghas.

Why the British should have desired to arrest or even reverse the process of tribal decomposition and to maintain and prop up the tribal leaders may only secondarily be attributed to a certain amount of prejudice on the part of some of their officials against the people of the cities, or to a more distinct tendency towards romanticizing the shaikhly stratum. "The longer the tribal system can be preserved," remarked one British political officer in 1918, "the better; and when at last it fails from natural causes, it is to be hoped that. . . no low-born Baghdadi will be permitted to dance prematurely and indecently on its grave."[114] Gertrude Bell, the Oriental secretary of the high commissioner, wrote in 1922 of the shaikhs: "They are the people I love, I know every tribal chief of any importance through the whole length and breadth of Iraq, and I think them the backbone of the country."[115] More detached Englishmen on the spot had other things to say. "We tend to regard," wrote the political officer of ʻAmārah Division in November 1920,

> the shaikh *qua* shaikh as of great importance in keeping his *muqāṭaʻah* in order, whereas as a matter of fact he is more or less of a figurehead, with very little power beyond that which he obtains from the support of government. The individuality of the shaikh, in this Division, counts for very little. We have fallen into the error of over-rating his value and consulting him too much, to the exclusion of educated and far-seeing men of other classes . . . . We have lost sight of the fact that the shaikh does not represent agricultural interests from the point of view of either the *sirkāl*[116] or the *fallāḥ*.[117]

The political officer of Ḥillah, writing in 1917 in a somewhat similar vein, revealed how difficult it had been in his district "to force the [tribal] sections to pay some heed to their shaikhs."[118] From the standpoint of the Sulaimāniyyah officer of 1919, the revival of tribalism was "a retrograde movement." "One may even remember," he said, "that so long as Scotland remained tribal, it produced nothing and nationally was a pauper.'[119] The Shāmiyyah officer, for his part, noted that in his division the big tribal unit was disintegrating, and that this "reflects the desires of the people themselves who are openly averse to its tyranny" because it "places great power in the hands of a chief whom they seldom see–a power which he usually wields to fill his own pocket and which they know he could not possess but for the support of government."[120] Reporting the murder in 1921 of three shaikhs by their own tribesmen, the Muntafiq divisional adviser brought out that in his area the tribes appeared anxious "to throw off all vestige of control by the shaikh."[121]

If in many regions, as is clear, shaikhly power was not desired by the tribesmen nor conducive to their well-being, why did the English proceed to rebuild and solidify it?

The shaikh's usefulness to the English may initially have been a mere expedient. He was the readiest medium to hand through which they could carry on the administration of the countryside. Other alternatives–the distrusted officials of the former Turkish government, and the "semi-educated young townsman,"[122] the *bête noire* of British officials–were unpalatable. There will always be cause to wonder whether the shaikh who, at least in some areas, appears to have been, as one British officer put it, "usually ignorant, narrow-minded, and unprogressive" and unlikely to "recommend any scheme which however beneficial to the rest of the community touches his pocket or his dignity in the slightest degree,"[123] was more fitted for provincial government. At any rate, what may have begun as an administrative expedient ended as a political necessity.

The necessity arose from the circumstance that English policy in the twenties was subject to two influences that were somewhat incompatible. On the one hand, in view of their general economic conditions, the English had to be sparing in their expenditure ("We have no money to spend in Mesopotamia," the secretary of state for India had warned in 1920[124]) which in due course led to a drastic reduction of British military forces.[125] On the

other hand, they were averse to abandoning the crucial levers of power in Iraq. This found a mirroring in the Treaties of 1922 and 1926 and in the Subsidiary Military, Judicial, Financial, and British Employees Agreements of 1924.[126] The problem for British policy was, therefore, how to retain control under conditions of relative military weakness. Since strength could not be had from economy-minded England, it could only be sought in Iraq itself, and mainly by an appropriate balancing of internal political forces.

To obviate the necessity for large and expensive bodies of fighting men, British supremacy had naturally to be as little conspicuous as possible. For this reason Iraq was given a king and an army. The king, who owed the English so much (note Gertrude Bell's: "I'll never engage in creating kings again; it's too great a strain" [July 8, 1921] and "We've got our King crowned" [August 28, 1921]),[127] could not, however, be expected simply to rule for them. He had ideas and interests of his own.[128] He and his army were, therefore, hedged not only legally by the provisions of the aforementioned treaties,[129] but also in more tangible terms.

For one thing, the army was kept below strength and on a strictly voluntary basis, so that it was only partly effectual, and at the same time financially back-breaking.[130] For another thing, the mercenary, British-officered, locally recruited "Iraq Levies" were expanded–a much cheaper proposition than that of bringing in British or Indian troops–and was now drawn exclusively from the small unintegrated racial and religious minority of Assyrians.[131] Finally–and it is here that the shaikhs and aghas came into play–while the king was allowed to be militarily stronger than any single tribal chief, he was left weaker than some or all of the tribal chiefs together. As late as March 1933, in a memorandum circulated among a few of his confidants, King Faiṣal complained, as has been noted in another connection, that "in this kingdom there are more than 100,000 rifles, whereas the government has only 15,000."

Under such circumstances the English could always use one group or other of the big tribal chiefs to check any possible deviation by the king from the line upon which they had their will fixed. When, for instance, in 1922 Faiṣal took upon himself to work for the defeat of the British "mandatory" scheme for Iraq, Shaikh ʻAddāi aj-Jaryān of Albū Sulṭān and fifteen other shaikhs from the Ḥillah Shaṭṭ strongly protested in a telegram to the high commissioner their "support for this useful scheme without

which the ‘Iraq and her sons cannot achieve progress.”[132] The shaikhs of Banī Rabī‘ah, for their part, made known that they viewed “with sincere horror the possible withdrawal of British supervision.”[133] More than that, Shaikh ‘Alī Sulaimān of the Dulaim and forty other tribal chiefs, in an audience with Faiṣal, unabashedly reminded him that “they had sworn allegiance to him on condition that he accepted British guidance.”[134]

The balance that the English thus held was not, to be sure, always tilted against the king. If a shaikh or agha kicked over the traces, or grew uncomfortably strong, or defied at the wrong turn the authority of Faiṣal, the English did not hesitate to cut him down to size, or to remove him altogether, or even to bomb his villages, burn his crops, and disperse his tribe.[135]

A condition of balance was maintained not only between the king and the tribal chiefs, but also between shaikh and shaikh, and agha and agha. Thus in the Kurdish district of Rānya, the English so arranged matters as to be able, when necessary, to play off the aghas of the Ākō tribe against the agha of Pīrān, and the agha of Pīrān against the agha of Pizhdar.[136] For balancing purposes, the principle of state ownership of the land proved convenient. For example, the richest estate of the province of ‘Amārah, the Shahālah, which had been held under lease by Shaikh Muḥammad al-‘Araibī of the Albū Muḥammad, was divided in 1922 between him and another chief of the same tribe, Shaikh Fāliḥ aṣ-Ṣaihūd, because, other things considered, the division insured, in the words of a British official report, “a better and safer balance of power among the Albū Muḥammad shaikhs than that existing.’[137]

The English drew sustenance, therefore, from the multiplicity of rival local forces and from the equilibrium in which they kept them. By this means, ironically enough, they made themselves, at least in the twenties, indispensable to Faiṣal: he could not, while they held the reins, radically correct his sad military condition; but on this very account he would not have been able to deal with two simultaneous tribal risings had the British suddenly withdrawn from the country. In this game the tribal chiefs, in particular the bigger ones, were not mere marionettes. They tried their best, as Faiṣal himself put it in 1927, “to profit by any disagreements. . . between the British and the Iraq Government to weaken both and thereby strengthen their own position and avoid paying taxes.”[138] But in pressing this fact upon

the attention of the English, Faiṣal was also obviously playing for his own hand.

How jealous the English were in safeguarding the existing power equation can be gathered from their reaction to any attempt to upset it. Throughout the twenties one of the most cherished ideas of Faiṣal and his officers was conscription.[139] The application of this principle would not only have reduced substantially the cost of the king's army and allowed a considerable increase in its numbers, but would also have undermined the shaikhs and aghas by depriving them of some of their best men and demolishing the rigid lines between the tribes. The English, as could be expected, strongly opposed the idea. Even when the king's officers undertook to restrict conscription to townsmen, they refused to permit any reference to this matter in the Schedule of Expansion of the Iraq Army attached to the Military Agreement of 1924, "as this might cause groundless apprehension in tribal areas."[140] When at length, in 1927, in the teeth of their resistance, the king's government drew up a conscription bill, the British high commissioner, determined to prevent its passage, insisted that Iraq's premier should make clear, in a special statement before Parliament, that the British government would not agree to the use of British forces to support the measure if some elements of the population were to oppose it.[141] Significantly, when in 1928 talk of a conscription bill was revived, one tribal chief, ʻAbd-ul-ʻAbbās al-Farhūd of Banī Rabīʻah, declared in a meeting attended by the shaikh-deputies, that he had a following of 3,000 men and "would rather go over to Ibn Saʻūd than have them conscripted." Another shaikh, Manshad al-Ḥubayyib of al-Ghazzī, said he would do the same.[142]

The English were also careful not to allow any disturbance of the power scale through the weakening of the tribal chiefs' hold on the land. When, for example, in 1926 the Iraqi Ministry of Finance sought to "destroy . . . the system under which large tracts of country are leased to (the) semi-feudal tribal chiefs" of ʻAmārah, the high commissioner interposed his "veto,"[143] and prevailed upon a conference, attended by the premier, the minister of interior, the minister of finance, and their British advisers, to adopt "the most important decision. . . that there should be no deliberate policy of breaking down the position of the larger shaikhs."[144]

In propping up the tribal chiefs, the English did not think in terms of a counterpoise merely against the king and his men, but also against the cities and towns, which were the real centers of opposition to British rule. The old division between tribesmen and townsmen was turned to advantage and, in no small measure, solidified. A special code, the Tribal Criminal and Civil Disputes Regulation, excluded the tribesmen from the jurisdiction of the national courts and imparted a binding force to their usages and customs.[145] The high commissioner made a point of impressing upon the Iraqi government that the code was a "regular law of the country,"[146] and had to "restrain" successive Iraqi cabinets from doing away with it.[147] Under one of its sections–Section 40–any undesirable townsman could be removed from the tribal territories and even, on an interpretation put forward in 1925, from nontribal areas, and be required to live at such place within Iraq as an administrative order might specify.[148] This interpretation had the effect of extending to the cities the force of what in essence was an arbitrary administrative regulation.

The policy of separating tribesmen from townsmen was carried to the extent of planning for a special residential school for the sons of tribal shaikhs on the lines of Gordon College at Kharṭūm or the chiefs' colleges in India. "Boys of this class," read a 1918 British report, "should not be sent to urban schools to herd with townsmen and be corrupted by the manifold vices of an Iraq city, nor should they associate with those whom their parents regard as their inferiors."[149] Money for a shaikhs' college was allowed in, and afterwards cut out from, every budget during the years 1920-1924.[150] In the end the project was thought to be too costly.

How far did the English go in reviving and solidifying the power of the shaikh and agha?

In the first place, the process of tribal disintegration was reversed. The progress of villages toward independence from surrounding tribes was as far as possible arrested, the commingling of different tribes forbidden, and the escape of peasant tribesmen from the shaikhs' lands prevented.[151] In Kurdistan, in the words of the British political officer of Sulaimāniyyah, "every man who could be labelled as a tribesman was placed under a tribal leader; . . . petty village headmen were unearthed and discovered as leaders of long dead tribes; disintegrated sedentary clans . . . were told to reunite and remember that they had once been tribesmen."[152] Wherever possible

and advisable, the power in each tribe was vested in one man, a sectional head being elevated to paramount rank. The English went to great length to vindicate the authority of this man. For example, when a subsection of the Albū Sulṭān pursued in 1918 a blood feud, in defiance of the chosen paramount shaikh ʻAddāi aj-Jaryān, the political officer concerned marched out with a force of levies, destroyed the village of the subsection and, by way of penalty, deprived it of cattle worth 6,000 rupees or more.[153] Again, in 1926 the English used armored cars and aircraft to beat off sub-tribes rebelling against Shaikh ʻAjīl al-Yāwer of Shammar.[154] Not all the tribal chiefs aspired to this sometimes not too comfortable overlord-ship. In one instance, the shaikh nominee sat "for many days . . . on the Political Officer's doorstep pleading old age and a hundred and one other excuses and begging to be allowed to live quietly without the worry of the tribe.[155] In another instance, the appointed chief freed himself of the burden of the shaikhship by proceeding on a pilgrimage to Mecca.[156] The subshaikhs also had no liking for the tribal overlord-ship. In one district the leaders of four tribal sections went to the great pain of assembling all the important local persons to persuade the political officer that their sections were not one tribe, but four.[157]

In the second place, the paramount tribal chief became responsible for the administration of the law among his tribesmen. He settled, in effect, all disputes between them, although theoretically his findings in important cases had to receive–according to Section 8(10) of the Tribal Disputes Regulation–the approval of the political officer. He was also charged with the collection of government revenue. No practical safeguard existed against his abuse of any of these powers. It was not easy to implement the condition that the shaikh or agha should conduct himself towards his tribesmen "in a manner consonant with British ideas of justice,"[158] for sometimes, if not often, it was "extremely difficult," as one British officer complained, "for any one outside (the shaikhs' *muqāṭaʻahs)* to arrive at the real truth of things."[159]

In the third place, the dignity of the position of the tribal chiefs was enhanced by their "election" to Parliament. They had not been privileged in the Ottoman period to sit in the *Majlis al-Mabʻūthān*.[160] In the Turkish Chamber, which was elected in 1914, only one out of the 34 deputies representing Iraq descended from a shaikhly family, but was himself by

birth and ideas a townsman.[161] By contrast, out of the 99 members who made up the Iraqi Constituent Assembly of 1924, no fewer than 34 were shaikhs and aghas.[162] The allotment of so large a number of seats to their class was justified on the ground that "the tribal *muḍīf*[163] is a better training center for citizens than the coffee shop."[164] Significantly enough, the 34 chiefs took an oath, before the gathering of the Assembly, "to support the [Anglo-Iraqi] Treaty [of 1922] and not to take any action without common consent." They also pronounced themselves in favor of the introduction of clauses into the Organic Law that would provide for "full and even a more extensive use" of the Tribal Disputes Regulation, and for the "non-alienation" of the government lands of which they had possession.[165] But they did not for long remain in accord, as the English had hoped. At the appropriate moment, however, enough of them were marshaled and the passage of the treaty made sure.

The position of the tribal chiefs was also reinforced by economic means. The land tenure policy–which is discussed at another point–was to a large extent subordinated to this end. The interests of state revenue were similarly affected. Collection of the land tax had never been efficient in Turkish days. Not infrequently, the procedure was for officials to estimate the crops by eye or to arrive at the amount over a cup of coffee in the shaikh's *muḍīf* or the agha's *dīwān-khānah*. Some chiefs refused or evaded payment. Occasionally a military force would be sent out. In one instance a recalcitrant shaikh and some of his relatives were publicly executed and the revenue demand collected in full.[166] But when no force could be spared, contributions lapsed. However, even under circumstances of this kind, the Turks managed in 1911 to realize as much as the equivalent of 731,000 dīnārs[167] of revenue from land, and 179,000 dīnārs from the *koda* or animal head tax. In absolute terms receipts from these sources were greater during the years of the British Occupation and Mandate (consult Table 6-2) but, as was pointed out by a high British revenue official in 1924, the actual increase was small, and the higher figures "largely explicable by the higher level of prices."[168] Be that as it may, agriculture, being Iraq's primary source of wealth, can hardly be said to have in those years contributed its proper share to the state budget. Only in 1918 did this share approach the 1911 Turkish percentage. Otherwise, while in 1911 land revenue produced 44.3 percent of all state receipts, in 1919 it yielded only about 30 percent; in

1921, 27.6 percent; in 1926, 23 percent; and in 1930, 11.7 percent. By contrast, as is clear from the same table, realizations from the indirect customs and excise dues rose markedly. In part, the relatively low land revenue of that period could be attributed to the lack of trained revenue personnel, the absence of exact knowledge, and the difficulties in collection, but it is also explained by the overriding political consideration of solidifying shaikhly power. This tax favoritism did not extend to all tribal chiefs. The main beneficiaries were the "loyal"' big shaikhs of the provinces of ʻAmārah and Kūt. "It is well known," wrote the political officer of ʻAmārah in 1918, "that shaikhs are now rolling in wealth owing to the cheapness of their farm rents under our administration. . . . We have pursued a policy of generosity hitherto which has probably repaid us by inducing the shaikhs to help us to the best of their ability. But where we reduce, the shaikhs do not always reduce for their *sirkāls* and peasants."[169] "One thing," he concluded, "seems clear: the policy of backing up the big shaikhs is incompatible with the principle of a wide dispersion of wealth and prosperity."[170] Although at that time ʻAmārah was one of the richest provinces of Iraq, and nearly all its lands were *mīrī*, that is, belonged to the state, the demand was only moderately enhanced, and the interests of revenue continued to give way to "the political object of maintaining powerful and friendly shaikhs as large landholders"[171] until 1922, when a specially deputed British officer reported, after a careful inquiry, that the shaikhs could easily afford a 50 percent rise on their rents. But this was whittled down to half, partly because of falling prices. The demand from the province was, therefore, raised from 21.40 lakhs of rupees (160,500 dīnārs) in 1922 to 26.76 lakhs (200,700 dīnārs) in 1923. None the less, only 22.26 lakhs (166,950 dīnārs) were actually collected because "a vociferous and persistent complaint arose from some of the most influential shaikhs" and the reiteration of the complaint "at the somewhat difficult moment of the passage of the Treaty." For this reason, and to make allowance for the "thriftless ways" of the tribal chiefs, the assessment was revised and the increase, introduced in 1923, spread over a period of five years.[172] In 1926, however, the high commissioner permitted an annual enhancement of about three lakhs.[173] Accordingly, ʻAmārah contributed 25.79 lakhs, or 193,425 dīnārs, in 1928.[174] The tax burden borne by the big shaikhs of Kūt was lighter. In fact, the payments of their province decreased from 4.71 lakhs

(35,325 dīnārs) in 1918[175] to 3.48 lakhs (26,100 dīnārs) in 1928.[176] An attempt by the king's government in 1922 to raise, in the interest of "uniformity," the revenue demand rate on the shaikhs' lands was opposed by the English on the ground that the step "cannot but have serious consequences in sensitive tribal areas." "The ordering," they added, "of drastic changes by an academic cabinet without consulting the local authorities [that is, the British administrative inspector] is to be deprecated."[177]

One privilege which all landed tribal chiefs enjoyed was immunity, until 1927, from the property tax. The Iraqi Council of Ministers had tried two years earlier to extend the effect of this tax, which fell only upon townsmen, to property in villages of not less than fifty buildings, but the high commissioner asked the king to block the measure on the ground that it "would open a wide door to oppression."[178]

Another means by which tribal chiefs were buttressed was the system of subsidies and cash presents. This had particular application to the leaders of nomadic tribes. In 1926, for example, ʻAjīl al-Yāwer, the paramount shaikh of Shammar, received 1.68 lakhs (12,600 dīnārs), and Fahd ibn Ḥaḍhḍhal of ʻAnizah 1.44 lakhs (10,800 dīnārs) for "services rendered" and by way of reward for their "protection" of the overland routes which they themselves endangered. The Iraq Parliament had resolved at the beginning of 1926 to abolish these and other shaikhly allowances, but the resolution was reversed upon the insistence of the high commissioner. No other machinery, he argued, had been developed for the control of the western and northwestern frontiers.[179] The high commissioner had also allowed both shaikhs to collect a fixed fee from the members of their own tribes wishing to make purchases in towns. Moreover, he had temporarily authorized one of the shaikhs of Shammar to exact a *khāwah* or toll from unescorted caravans and motorcars on the road to Syria.[180] Over and above this, he had given the Iraqi government on August 24, 1925, the "very reluctant" advice to permit raiding between Shammar and ʻAnizah because the shaikhs had remonstrated with him that "unless their tribes were permitted to carry on their traditional raiding, they would not be able to keep them together under them and the bulk would desert to Syrian territory" where such warfare was not discouraged.[181] A campaign of "licensed raiding" followed, which before long encroached on cultivated and nontribal regions, attracted

semisettled tribesmen, and produced a welter of ferocious blood feuds and "exceedingly high" casualties.[182]

From the foregoing observations it should be clear that the semi-feudal shaikhly structure of the "mandatory" period did not derive its strength from any inner vitality. Life was pumped into it artificially by an outside force that had an interest in its perpetuation. In other words, the shaikhs and aghas, at least for the most part, ruled not by virtue of their own power or the willingness and loyalty of their peasants, but by the desire and sufferance of the English.

However, even while building up the tribal chief, the English unwittingly undermined him, for their presence implied more order, greater security, and improved communications, all of which, along with other factors, rendered him, from the standpoint of the peasant, increasingly superfluous.

But if the power of the tribal chiefs had come to depend so much on English presence, why didn't it decline after the withdrawal of English internal control in 1932? To answer this question, it is necessary to cast a glance at the policy of Iraq's monarchic government.

In the twenties and thirties, the monarch and the tribal chiefs were basically rivals. The former represented the ideal of a unified community, the latter its negation. The growth of the monarch's power involved, therefore, the weakening of the position of the shaikhs and aghas.

By reason of its newness, its non-Iraqi origin, and its condition of dependence, the monarchy inspired in its early years neither awe nor affection. Many of the bigger tribal leaders had given the king an oath of fealty merely for the sake of form and to please England. "O Faiṣal," said the shaikhs of Dulaim and ʻAnizah to the king when he paid them a visit on the Euphrates on July 31, 1921, "we swear allegiance to you because you are acceptable to the British government."[183] From the point of view of a monarch bent on consolidating his rule over the whole of Iraq, such a definition of political relationships was intolerable; and from the outset, Faiṣal appears to have aspired to deal a blow to these rival centers of power. Thus the first royal *mutaṣarrif*[184] of Muntafiq came to the province in 1921 armed with "private injunctions from the King . . . to bring the [British-backed] shaikhs to heel,"[185] and indeed soon put an end to their allowances and refused to confirm their appointment as tax collectors. But the hostility

of the shaikhs and the obstacles thrown in his way by the British provincial adviser drove him to hand in his resignation and return to Baghdād. The king, however, ordered him back to his post, whereupon the high commissioner "strongly urged" upon Faiṣal "the undesirability" of his retention in office in view of his "unpopularity" and "unconcealed anti-British sympathies," and the king had to yield.[186] Restrained from one course of action, Faiṣal sought to attain his object by other means. We have seen already how his ministers tried to put an end to the preferential treatment accorded to the shaikhs of Kūt in matters of taxation, to split up the huge estates leased to the shaikhs of ʻAmārah, and, by the aid of the plan for a conscripted army, to tip the military balance against the tribal chiefs, and how these attempts availed nothing against the determination of the English to shield the shaikhly stratum. The king, however, had also recourse to more subtle tactics. He thus carefully cultivated the loyalty of rivals of the dominant pro-British shaikhs.[187] Moreover, in 1922 his agent, friend, and *mutaṣarrif* in Ḥillah, ʻĀlī Jawdat al-Ayyūbī, worked out with ʻAbd-ul-Wāḥid al-Ḥājj Sikar, chief of al-Fatlah, and others known for their resistance to British rule a secret plan to set up in each tribe on the mid-Euphrates a shaikh hostile to the shaikh recognized by the British, and to organize petitions in support of their own nominees.[188] Simultaneously, the king attempted to use some of the tribal leaders to improve his position vis-à-vis the British. For example, in the year just referred to, the pro-British shaikhs of the Shāmiyyah believed that the anti-Mandate propaganda, which was conducted by their rivals, and which aimed at strengthening Faiṣal's hand in pending negotiations with the British government, had been undertaken at "the direct order" of the king, and that the funds expended on it came from him personally.[189] Again in 1927 Faiṣal, intent upon securing better terms from the British, apparently gave instructions to Jamīl al-Midfa ʻī, his *mutaṣarrif* in Dīwāniyyah, to induce the shaikhs of the province "to agitate" against the Anglo-Iraqi Military and Financial Agreements and for complete independence. In return for their services, certain outstanding land cases were to be settled in their favor.[190] By virtue of their well-known role in the anti-British uprising of 1920, the Dīwāniyyah shaikhs were more susceptible than others of their class to this type of royal approach. Of course, from the standpoint of the king, a

betterment of his position vis-à-vis the British meant in effect also a betterment of his position vis-à-vis the shaikhs themselves.

If, aside from the temporary coincidence of the interests of Faiṣal and the unprivileged anti-British shaikhs, the king and the tribal chiefs generally were political rivals, how could the continued influence of the shaikhly stratum after 1932 be accounted for?

The king's government at Baghdād had still an inadequate fighting capacity in 1932, and could not as yet act in a decisive manner. However, in the second half of the thirties, with the great increase in the numerical strength and the Alī and artillery firepower of the armed forces,[191] the shaikhs in the flatlands and the aghas in the plains–but not in the mountain fastnesses–decayed militarily. Nonetheless their economic position was left intact, and in the next two decades palpably strengthened. Their political weight was also enhanced. The reasons are not far to seek.

For one thing, Faiṣal, though eager to eliminate the military power of the tribal chiefs and to subordinate them to his authority, never envisaged their destruction as a group. "The shaikhs and aghas," he wrote to his closest aides in 1933, "should not be given cause to feel that it is the intention of the government to wipe them out; on the contrary we should, as far as circumstances permit, assure them of their livelihood and well-being."[192]

For another thing, in spite of their abhorrence of tribal power, the urban *sādah-mallāks*, the bureaucrat-*mallāks*, and the ex-Sharīfian officers-turned-*mallāks*, who filled the high offices of the state, had, being landholders themselves, some community of interest with that other larger stratum of landholders, the shaikhs and aghas, whom they benefited by laws made in the first instance with a view to their own good.

But far more conducive to the continuance of the shaikhly stratum was the unbalancing of the monarchic government, first, by the death of Faiṣal in 1933 and the accession of the unqualified Ghāzī; and second, by the rise in the period 1936-1941 of army officers from the middle and lower middle classes to a position of political independence. This monarchic unbalance redounded to the advantage of shaikh and agha in two ways. First, it disturbed so seriously the internal power distribution that the British had in mind for Iraq, and that at a very critical phase of the international power conflict, that it precipitated the return of the old allies of the tribal chiefs. In the ensuing short period of British reoccupation (1941-1946), it was natural,

particularly in view of the fact that the military nationalism of 1941 drew its support from urban elements, that the British should readopt their old policy of strengthening the tribal countryside. The new British liaison officers, therefore, played the same role in the provinces as the political officers of the first occupation and the administrative inspectors of the "Mandate." The tribal chiefs benefited from the unbalance in another way. Regent ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh–who had taken over the royal helm at the death of Ghazī in 1939, had run for his life at the climax of the 1941 crisis, but had been restored to authority by British guns–now realized, as did the most important man in the kingdom, Nūrī as-Saʻīd, that in the new situation the Hashemite dynasty and the tribal chiefs had become necessary for one another and that the army, the very mainstay of royal government in the past, could no longer, despite wide-scale purges, be trusted. The alignment of internal political forces in the period 1946-1958 was, therefore, to offer a marked contrast to that of the period 1921-1933. For while in the first decade of the monarchy the king, the tribal chiefs, and the more influential of the town *mallāks* were divided by rivalries and mutual mistrust, and the king at various points secretly financed and cooperated with the nationalist movement, in the period 1946-1958, ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh, Nūrī as-Saʻīd, and the bigger shaikhs, aghas, and town *mallāks* made common cause, all now threatened by the growth of the intensely leftist or intensely nationalist intelligentsia allied with the urban masses and, as it subsequently turned out, having a firm foothold in the army itself. It is all these factors that gave the tribal chiefs an additional, though temporary, lease on life.

One indicator of the reorientation of the monarchic policy towards the shaikhs and aghas is the great increase in the number of parliamentary seats assigned to them in the days of ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh (see Table 6-1). In a formal sense, it is not correct to speak of the "assignment" of seats to the tribal chiefs, as the pretense of "free elections" was always maintained. But confidential official reports throw ample light on the actual method of choosing deputies in the tribal country. "The elections," wrote on the tenth of September, 1930, a British administrative inspector to the adviser of the Ministry of Interior,

> "generally can be graded into three stages. Firstly, the *Qāim-maqām* [Subgovernor] manoeuvres himself into as strong a position as he can

by arranging for the right men to be ballotted for on the Committee on Inspection. Secondly, the *Qāim-maqām* must arrange that a smart Committee man is sent to the out-stations to ensure that the shaikh does not become too powerful by electing as secondary electors all his own relations plus the coffee man and various other hangers-on attached to the *muḍīf*. Cases have been known of shaikhs manipulating the elections so that they controlled all the secondary votes in the tribe and were thus in a position to auction thirty or more votes to the highest bidder. After the second stage is properly arranged, the setting is then ready for the third and final stage, i.e., the election of deputies, which, as every one knows, is conducted informally before the event by the *Mutaṣarrif* [Governor] in the privacy of his office and that of the *Qāim-maqām* concerned."[193]

TABLE 6-1

Representation of Shaikhs and Aghas in Parliament in Selected Years

(figures do not include tribal chiefs who were at the same time *sādah* or leaders of mystic orders)

	No. of shaikh- or agha-deputies	*Total no. of deputies*	*Percent*
The Turkish Majlis al-Mab'ūthān of 1914	1[a]	34[b]	2.9
The British-sponsored constituent assembly of 1924	34	99	34.3
Faiṣal I's chambers:			
1925	17	88	19.3
1928	13	88	14.8
1930	14	88	15.9
1933	18	88	20.5
The military-sponsored chamber of 1937	21	111	18.9
'Abd-ul-Ilāh's or Nūrī as-Sa'id's chambers:			
1943	37	116	31.9
1947	45	135	33.3
1948	46	135	34.1
1953	49	135	36.3
1954 (June)	49	135	36.3
1954 (September)	51	135	37.8
1958	52	145	35.9

[a]This deputy came from a family of shaikhly origin, but was not himself a shaikh.

[b]This was the number merely of Iraqi, and not of all Ottoman deputies.

Sources: The names of the deputies of 1914, 1924, 1925, and 1958 were taken from Sulaimān Faiḍī, *Fī Ghamrat-in-Niḍāl*, p. 140; Britain, *Intelligence Reports No 7* of 3 April 1924, pp. 7-9 and *No 13* of 25 June 1925, pp. 4-7; and *Al-Ḥurriyyah* (Baghdād) of 6 May 1958, respectively. The names of the deputies for the other years were derived from *Maḥādīr Majlis an-Nuwwāb* (The Records of the Chamber of Deputies) and al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, IX, 241 ff.

The methods of the government scarcely improved in later years despite the ending of the formality of indirect elections by Decree No. 6 of 1952.[194] Except, on occasions, for some of the seats of the larger towns, royal Parliaments continued to be packed rather than elected, and to the end would possess neither moral force nor popular confidence.

The shift in the attitude of the Crown toward the shaikhly families in the days of ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh was also clearly expressed in the attempt to enhance their role in the executive branch of the slate. One big hindrance to this endeavor was the very low incidence of literacy among them. Nonetheless, their share of ministerial appointments, which had been only 1.8 percent in 1921-1932, and had dropped to nil in 1932-1941, rose to 3.4 percent in 1941-1946 and to 6 percent in 1947-1958 (see Table 7-3). Because of their distaste of discipline and their lack of the requisite qualities, not many men of the shaikhly stratum could be drawn into the officer corps. Indeed, only two attained command positions in the armed forces in the last decade of the monarchy: Staff Major General Muzhir ash-Shāwī, a divisional commander, and Air Brigadier Kāḍhim al-ʻAbādī, commander of the Air Force. The former, though a Baghdādi, was from the ruling shaikhly family of the tribe of ʻUbaid, the latter from that of al-Fatlah.

Another sign of the times was the enrollment of the majority of the big tribal chiefs in the Constitutional Union party, which was set up in 1949 under Nūrī as-Saʻīd's own leadership. Among others, ʻAbdallah Āl-Yāsīn of Mayyāḥ, Muḥammad Ḥabīb al-Amīr of Rabīʻah, Mūḥān al-Khairallah of ash-Shuweilāt, ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin aj-Jaryān of Albū Sulṭān, Majīd al-Khalīfah of Albū Muḥammad, and Ḥamīd Beg of the Jāf tribe belonged to the "Higher Directorate" of the party. All together, there were seventeen shaikhs and aghas on this body and its total membership was forty-six.[195] Nūrī had for a time entertained the notion of organizing the vested interests of the country. For this reason he brought the Constitutional Union into being. But having little faith in party life and a strong predisposition for backstage politics, he allowed the party before long to fall into a moribund

condition. Simultaneously, the regime forbade the organization of the other classes of the countryside. Typical of its attitude was this comment by a provincial chief of police on an application by the National Democrats to open a branch for their party in Dīwāniyyah: “In view of the fact that Dīwāniyyah is one of the more important tribal provinces and the majority of its inhabitants are simple people, approval of the application may lead to a disturbance of the public peace.”[196]

The partiality toward the tribal chiefs and the landed class generally was also reflected in the fiscal policy of the day. In general, as is clear from Table 6-2, revenue from land pointed to an accentuation of the community of interests between the town *mallāks* and the shaikhs and aghas: whereas in the period 1921-1930 land revenue produced between 11.7 and 27.6 percent of total state revenue, in the period 1931-1940 it yielded only between 7 and 10.5 percent, in the World War II period (the British reoccupation period) as high as 17.7 percent, and in the oil boom period (1952-1958) as low as 1.7 percent. Only in the last-mentioned years do the receipts of the state from oil account for the low land revenue percentage. On the other hand, after 1950 even the *absolute* contribution of the land to the public treasury decreased. The absolute land revenue of 1931-1940 was also lower than that of 1921-1929, but this was partly due to the depressed agricultural prices of the time. The contrasts that have just been drawn, are, however, to some extent misleading. This is because the tax on agricultural produce became, by virtue of Laws No. 83 of 1931 and No. 59 of 1933, an indirect *istihlāk*, or consumption tax. Only land products brought to market were now subject to a tax, at a rate which differed in different years but which, as regards the country's major farm crops–barley, wheat, rice, and dates–never exceeded 12½ percent.[197] But the really important point is that by this fiscal change the landed class was, from 1931 to the end of the monarchy, very lightly taxed, the weight of the *istihlāk* being in large measure passed on to the consumer through its effect on prices.[198] However, as a Danish financial expert remarked in the fifties, "it is difficult. . . to see that a complete shifting to the consumer should be possible in case the *istihlāk* is accompanied by an export duty as actually has been the case in Iraq."[199] It is not to be thought that the change in the character of the tax alleviated in any way the lot of the peasantry, for shaikh, agha, and town *mallāk* continued to collect from the tiller of the land the same old portions of the agricultural produce.

Let us, for a moment, before leaving this matter of revenue, dwell on the indirect customs and excise duties to which, as is evident from Table 6-2, the main interest of the taxing authority shifted. A study of the customs duties, which were more than double the excise taxes, revealed that the duties were concentrated on a few commodities. Thus in 1950 the duty on sugar brought in almost 25 percent of the total customs receipts, that on

textiles was of similar significance, and that on tea yielded about 10 percent.[200] Upon whom the burden of at least two of these duties was thrown should be clear from the results of a study-shown in Table 6-3–by Dr. A. Critchley on the eating habits of the people of Baghdād.[201]

TABLE 6-2

Land Revenue as Contrasted with Other Sources of Revenue in the Year 1911 and the Period 1918-1958

(in thousands of dīnars)

Year	Total revenue[a]	Land revenue[b]	Percent	Animal tax[c]	Percent	Oil revenue	Percent	Customs, excise	Percent
Turkish period									
1911	1,650	731	44.3	179	10.8			410	24.8
British period									
Occupation									
1918	2,198		1,181[d]		53.7[d]			487	22.1
1919	3,715		1,367[d]		36.7[d]			1,652	44.4
1920[e]	5,199		1,297[d]		24.9[d]			2,032	39.1
1921	3,962	1,096	27.6	204	5.2			1,735	43.7
Mandate									
1922	3,560	826	23.2	201	5.6			1,604	45.0
1923	3,821	816	21.3	230	6.0			1,814	47.4
1924	3,955	847	21.4	247	6.2			1,867	47.2
1925	4,358	1,114	25.5	215	4.9			1,903	43.6
1926	4,252	982	23.0	253	5.9			1,895	44.5
1927	4,432	984	22.2	272	6.1	8	.1	2,063	46.5
1928	4,458	1,016	22.7	315	7.0	12	.2	2,064	46.2
1929	4,310	866	20.0	297	6.8	14	.3	2,060	47.7
1930[f]	3,484	410	11.7	299	8.5	15	.4	1,765	50.6
1931	4,219	401	9.5	262	6.2	869	20.5	2,033	48.2
1932	4,215	396[g]	9.4[g]	211	5.0	524	12.4	1,931	45.8
Period of qualified independence									
1933	4,149	411	9.9	192	4.6	536	12.9	2,047	49.3
1934	5,023	457	9.0	205	4.0	989	19.6	2,305	45.8
1935	5,357	443	8.2	216	4.0	598	11.1	2,503	46.7
1936	6,027	636	10.5	278	4.6	600	9.9	2,823	46.8
1937	6,917	644	9.3	242	3.4	731	10.5	3,311	47.8
1938	7,838	601	7.6	251	3.2	1,977	25.2	3,260	41.5
1939	9,208	652	7.0	190	2.0	2,014	21.8	3,388	36.7
1940	9,718	752	7.7	309	3.1	1,576	16.2	3,136	32.2
Period of British reoccupation									
1941[h]	10,155	802	7.8	304	2.9	1,534	15.1	3,273	32.2
1942	13,827	1,714	12.4	415	3.0	1,576	11.4	4,505	32.5
1943	18,105	3,214	17.7	666	3.6	1,880	10.3	4,321	23.8
1944	18,897	3,334	17.7	768	4.0	2,225	11.7	5,619	29.7
1945	20,221	2,813	13.9	861	4.2	2,316	11.4	4,664	23.0
1946	25,097	3,546	14.1	803	3.1	2,327	9.3	7,180	28.6
Period of qualified independence resumed									
1947	26,012	2,835	10.8	710	2.7	2,346	9.0	8,851	34.0
1948	26,722	3,037	11.3	799	2.7	2,012	7.5	9,800	36.6
1949	28,633	3,236	11.3	800	2.7	3,238	11.3	11,295	39.4
1950	33,494	3,963	11.5	1,023	3.0	5,286	15.7	13,468	40.2
1951	45,001	3,665	8.1	904	2.0	13,295	29.5	15,642	34.7
1952	79,542	3,051	3.8	805	1.0	37,405	47.0	15,504	19.5
1953	91,474	2,866	3.1	625	.7	58,343	63.8	18,784	20.5
1954	104,080	2,919	2.8	447	.4	68,371	65.7	21,724	20.9
1955	115,395	2,163	1.9	388	.3	73,748	63.9	25,319	21.9
1956	110,920	2,190	2.0	270	.2	68,859	62.1	25,506	23.0
1957	96,054	2,527	2.6	247	.3	48,858	50.9	29,143	30.3
1958	129,393	2,229	1.7	216	.2	79,888	61.7	27,695	21.4

[a]Total revenue includes the figures for total oil revenue.

[b]Land revenue represents revenue from agricultural and natural produce.

[c]Animal head tax known as *koda*.

[d]These figures represent the revenue from the land and from the animal head tax.

[e]1920 was, it should be remembered, the year of the Iraqi *Thawrah* or Uprising.

[f]Effects of world depression began to be felt.

[g]The land and animal taxes were until 1931 directly levied, and after that date became indirect consumption imposts. Inflationary period attending the years of World War II opened.

Sources: Bulletin Annuel de Statistique (for 1911), quoted in Great Britain, *Report...on the Administration of Iraq, April 1923-December 1924*, pp. 133-135; Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration, 1914-1920*, p. 119; Philip Ireland, *Iraq. A Study of Political Development*, p. 126; Great Britain, *Reports...on the Administration of Iraq, April 1922-March 1923*, pp. 100 and 102; *April 1923-December 1924*, p. 126; *1925*, p. 89; *1926*, pp. 87 and 91; *1927*, p. 94; *1928*, p. 93; *1929*, p. 71; *1930*, p. 86; and *1931*, pp. 48-49; Aḥmad ‘Abd-ul-Baqī, *Mizāniyyat-ud-Dawlat-il-‘Irāqiyyah* (“The Budget of the Iraqi State”) (Cairo, 1947), pp. 62, 65, and 75; Iraq, Directorate of General Accounts, *At-Taqrīr-us-Sanawī ‘An Ḥisābāt-id-Dawlat-il-‘Irāqiyyah* (“Annual Report on the Accounts of the Iraqi State”) for 1950, pp. 58 and 60; and for 1954, p. 63; National Bank of Iraq, *Quarterly Bulletin No 15 of 1955*, pp. 33-35 and *No 23 of 1957*, pp. 33-35; K. Ḥaseeb, *The National Income of Iraq, 1953-1961* (London, 1964), p. 83; and Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstacts* for 1956, p. 239; for 1958, p. 343; and for 1959, p. 301.

More conclusive than any other measure of the monarchic régime in the consolidation of the tribal chiefs was its land settlement policy or, more precisely, its practical application in the forties and fifties of the *Lazmah* Law No. 51 of 1932, and the Settlement of Land Rights’ Laws No. 50 of 1932 and No. 29 of 1938 as amended by Law No. 36 of 1952.[202] These enactments created a new type of land tenure, *lazmah*, and regulated the already existing system, including the rights of *ṭāpū* which in 1932 were held uncertainly because of dubious or irregular Turkish title deeds. In brief, ultimate ownership of virtually all agricultural lands was in theory vested in the state. In other words, from the standpoint of the law, these lands were *mīrī ox* state lands. However, they were henceforth to be held by one of three kinds of *mīrī* tenure: *ṭāpū, lazmah*, and *mīrī ṣirf* or pure *mīrī*. The rights of disposal of the *mīrī ṣirf* remained in the hands of the state, but a large part of this class of land was rented to individuals, usually shaikhs, by auction or direct lease contract for a period which theoretically did not exceed three years. In fact, lands rented to big shaikhs tended to be rerented to them and, after their death, to their descendants. *Lazmah* rights were analogous to *ṭāpū* rights and, as indicated on other pages, both types of rights were in practice pretty much indistinguishable from rights of private ownership. However, *ṭāpū* rights were acquired on the strength of ten years of prescriptive use of the land, whereas, prior to an amendment incorporated in Law No. 36 of 1952, a “productive use” of the land *within*

the fifteen years preceding the declaration of land settlement in the particular district was enough to form the basis of *lazmah* grants. This in effect meant that if even in the year before the relevant declaration a landholder extended his tillage to adjacent virgin state land, or a shaikh or agha or wealthy townsman erected pressure pumps and made "productive use" of large tracts of such land, this was enough to entitle them to *lazmah* rights. The 1952 amendment merely tied the granting of these rights to evidence sufficient to establish three years of prescriptive use.

TABLE 6-3

On Whom the Tea and Sugar Duties Weighed Most Heavily

(the people of Baghdād's weekly expenditure on tea and sugar as percentage of total food expenditure)

Poorest people in *ṣarīfas*[a]	26%
Poor Moslem railway workers	16%
Better-paid Christian railway employees	10%
Iraqis with incomes from 1,000 to well over 10,000 dīnārs	not stated (insignificant)

[a]For the *ṣarīfas* and their dwellers, see pp. 134 ff.

Four additional points concerning the new land settlement need to be emphasized.

First, its real beneficiaries were not Iraq's peasants but its shaikhs, aghas, town capitalists, and higher officials.

Second, aside from the relatively small number of cases in which rights arose from long-standing usage or from old bona fide title deeds, the new settlement involved the *free* alienation of state land. By virtue of Law No. 73 of 1936, the *lazmah* and *ṭāpū* grants incurred only charges for water rights.[203] Moreover, Law No. 20 of 1939 eliminated these charges in return for the payment of a lump sum over a specified period, and a 1941 amendment to this law reduced the sum by 20 percent if paid before the passage of ten years. Many of the grantees were able to take advantage of the favorable condition thus offered thanks to the inflated agricultural prices

during the second World War, and their rise at a rate faster than that of other prices.[204]

Third, when it is kept in mind that in 1958 no fewer than thirty-two million dūnums of land were in private hands,[205] and that of the area ploughed in that year less than one-fourth was in cultivation before World War I, and a far smaller proportion privately owned, it should become clear that the phenomenon of private or semiprivate property in Iraq was, to a predominant extent, the consequence of the land policy initiated in 1932.

Finally, in its practical effect, and insofar as the shaikhly stratum was concerned, this policy amounted to a legal recognition of a process that had been taking place for a good many decades in Iraq's countryside: the usurpation by the shaikhs and aghas of the communal tribal domain, their dispossession of weaker neighbors, and their encroachments on virgin state land. Something must now be said about this, that is, about the origin of private shaikhly holdings; which brings us to a consideration of the third element upon which the position of the shaikhly stratum under the monarchy rested, the land–the other two elements being the already discussed policies of the British government and the Iraqi monarchy.

With the gradual opening of the world market to Iraqi products in the latter part of the nineteenth century, land became increasingly the crux of the shaikhship. In the river valleys a shaikh without land came to mean in effect a shaikh without tribe: a landless shaikh ended by commanding neither the respect nor the obedience of his tribesmen. The same happened to the agha. Possession of more and more land became, consequently, the highest social value of the tribal chief. Hence, as has earlier been noted, his transformation of the communal tribal land into his own property by the simple exertion of his will. Hence also his growing tendency toward land-grabbing. A British political officer left a very vivid description of this favorite shaikhly pastime:

> A common form of land-grabbing was to build towers in a strategic position on the land coveted. In many cases, I have been told, these towers were erected in a night, full preparations were made beforehand, all materials were conveyed to the site, and in the morning the temporary owner of the land upon which the tower had been build

> found himself the victim of an aggressive neighbour. The next step then would either be an attempt to drive off the invader, ending up probably by bringing all the tribes round and about into the fight or a retirement from the holding until a favourable opportunity occurred for downing the invader and getting back the land.[206]

Such a state of affairs was possible because in much of the tribal country there was in Ottoman times no law except

> the good old law, the simple plan
> that he should take who has the power
> and he should keep who can.[207]

The practice of land grabbing continued in one form or another into the twentieth century, and was still a marked feature of parts of the countryside in the period of the monarchy.

One shaikh that devoted much of his energy to trespassing on the lands of his neighbors and of the state was Mūḥān al-Khairullah, shaikh of the Shuweilāt, and for long member of parliament for the Muntafiq province. The tribe of this shaikh cultivated in 1919 on the Gharrāf an area of ten miles long by six miles broad,[208] which comes to about 60,000 dūnums. By 1949, Mūḥān al-Khairullah had, in the words of the district officer of Qal‘at Sikar, “laid his hands” on “more than one million dūnums” of land.[209] The governor of the province had the year before brought out that it took him no fewer than six hours to cross the land possessed by this shaikh, of which only a small part was cultivated, and urged the adoption of suitable measures to prevent him from encroaching on the state domain. [210] For their part, twenty-two smaller shaikhs from the ‘Abūdah, Banī Zaid, Kinānah, Albū Sa‘d, Banī Rikāb, Qaraghūl, and from the Shuweilāt–Mūḥān al-Khairullah’s own tribe–complained to the regent in 1949 that Mūḥān had taken the estates of al-Ḥumairiyyah and Ḥiṭamān, and the lands of the ‘Uqail from their owners by force, and attained his ends by allying himself with Sayyid ‘Abd-ul-Mahdī, many times minister of the economy and public works, and Ṣagbān al-‘Alī, shaikh of the Khafājah, and by setting the subsections of the various tribes against each other, causing thereby much bloodshed, at least fifteen being killed from the Kinānah tribe and

“more than one hundred” from the Albū Sa‘d, not to mention the burning down of a large number of villages.[211] No action from the side of the government appears to have followed.

Mūḥān al-Khairallah was not an exception. Other shaikhs, however, succeeded, through the mere tillage of the soil by their peasants, in obtaining legal title to most of the tracts of state land that they had occupied. The chiefs of Rabī‘ah and Mayyāḥ are cases in point. In 1917 Muḥammad al-Ḥabīb al-Amīr, paramount shaikh of Rabī‘ah, was a lessee of four government estates[212] covering an area of 48,293 dūnums.[213] Four decades later the same shaikh, now the father-in-law of Crown Prince ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh, held in his own name in *lazmah* no fewer than sixteen formerly *mīrī ṣirf* estates, amounting to 206,473 dūnums.[214] Similarly, in 1917 Muḥammad al-Yāsīn of Mayyāḥ held only three estates–half of one in *ṭāpū* and the rest by lease[215]–but in 1958 his descendants held in *ṭāpū* or *lazmah* as many as eleven estates or a total of 344,168 dūnums.[216]

The backing by the dominant families of Rabī‘ah and Mayyāḥ of the right horse politically or, to be more precise, their consistent support of the policies of the English and of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, also facilitated the affixing of the seal of law to their appropriations. The same factor accounted for the access of other shaikhs and aghas to ample estates. The Jaryāns, chiefs of the Albū Sulṭān, a section of the Zubaid tribe, to cite one example, had begun with next to nothing. In 1910 they did not have “even a piece of furniture to their name and slept in sacks.”[217] But by 1958 they had accumulated 183,722 dūnums of land in the provinces of Ḥillah and Kūt,[218] thanks largely to the assistance that they afforded the English during their occupation of the country and the official favor which they in consequence enjoyed.[219] As with the Jaryāns, so with the Suhail an-Najms, the chiefs of Banū Tamīm, who possessed in 1958 125,502 dūnums in the provinces of Baghdād and Diyālah,[220] and had helped the English in the First World War and during the 1941 events when Ḥasan as-Suhail, the founder of their fortune, fixed up landing strips on his estate for use by British Aircraft.[221] A similar factor is at the basis of the access to land of Shaikh Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān of al-‘Azzah: the greater part of the 55,727 dūnums that he owned in 1958[222] consisted of the rain-fed lands along the Khāliṣ River which the government of Yāsīn al-Hāshimī had granted to him in *lazmah* in

1936 as the price of his collaboration in the overthrow the year before of the rival cabinet of ʻAlī Jawdat al-Ayyūbī.[223]

One agha, Aḥmad Pasha, a chief of the Kurdish tribe of Diza'ī, whose family possessed about eighteen villages in 1918 in the district of Qush Tappa,[224] and in 1958 had legal title to 52,350 dūnums of land in the province of Arbīl,[225] heaped up his wealth by methods from which tribal leaders generally would have shrunk away. "In his early years," wrote the British political officer of Arbīl in 1919,

> Aḥmad Pasha was penniless and eked out a livelihood by keeping gaming tables in the Arbīl coffee shops. One day he stole two mules, went off to Kandināwah and started to cultivate. He managed to wheedle an agricultural advance out of the Turkish Government and with this he commenced his career as a usurer. He has now over £T[226] 50,000 out on interest at 33% per annum and is said to possess £T 200,000 in gold in his house. His agricultural enterprises have prospered and he has been a most successful land-grabber.[227]

Often a long history of violence lay behind part of the property or, to use the language of the tribes, the *ḥalāl* of important shaikhly families, such as those of the Jāf and Shammar. In Ottoman times the chiefs of the Jāf, the most numerous tribe of southern Kurdistan, "relentlessly persecuted" the sedentary population of the plain of Shahri-zūr, extracting yearly sums from villagers and "commandeering" anything to which they took a fancy. "The less said about them," read a contemporary diplomatic report, "the better. Their sordid vices and scandals are of no interest but that this huge district should be a prey to such people is deplorable."[228] Official archives are also full of the accounts of depredations by the shaikhs of Shammar. In August 1871, for example, they pillaged some two hundred villages in the vicinity of Niṣībīn, killing many peasants and carrying off "the grain, cattle, and everything they could remove."[229] In February 1910 they swept off, in the regions of Mosul and Tall Aʻfar, about 18,000 sheep belonging to various villagers and traveling merchants.[230] In 1919 they were regarded as a "public pest" and in part lived of the smaller pastoral tribes of the Jazīrah from whom they collected "tribute" on a fixed basis, "two sheep, four ewes,

four lambs, and six *mejīdīs*[231] in cash being taken in respect of each flock."[232] Of course, from the standpoint of the Sham-marites themselves, such activities could not be labelled as "robbery" or "blackmail." As far as they were concerned, theft consisted only in taking from one of the tents of their own tribe. Moreover, though ravages and spoils did contribute to the accumulations of their shaikhs, the greater, if not the entire, portion of the 346,747 dūnums that the Yāwers, the leading family of Shammar, owned in 1958,[233] had been granted to them in legal title by the monarchic government at nominal or no charges whatever. According to a 1942 report by the British embassy, the paramount Shammarite, Shaikh ʻAjīl al-Yāwer "cultivated influential friends in high places and through them acquired much land. This was given him in order that he might settle his tribe and persuade them to give up their old habits of marauding. What he did, however, was to farm the land for his own profit with hired labour without attempting to settle the Bedouin Shammar."[234] All or the better part of the 310,314 dūnums owned in 1958 by the Farḥans,[235] the cousins of the Yāwers, were obtained in much the same way. This was true also of the bulk of the 539,333 dūnums that the chiefs of the Jāf, the Jāf Begzādahs, held in the same year.[236]

In the period of the monarchy, the land, constituting, as it did, a central support of the position of the tribal chief, provided also, as only followed, a key to much of his political thinking and behavior. In the old days of the military confederations, the central ideal of shaikhly culture was warlike valor and the natural basis of leadership was manliness, courage, and superior strength. But now what mattered most was having an ample and rich estate. With this came increasingly to be associated shaikhly excellence and dignity.

An eminently unlettered class, the shaikhs and aghas left very little in the way of writings. They appended their names, to be sure, on many petitions which, however, often reflected less their attitudes than an excess of zeal on the part of a British political officer, or a royal mutaṣarrif, or a representative of the Najaf chief mujtahid. But here and there we get an inkling of their ideas and values. In an unofficial meeting of the Iraqi Constituent Assembly on May 22, 1924, after hearing a plea by Premier Jaʻfar al-ʻAskarī for the acceptance of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, Shaikh Sālim al-Khayyūn of Banī Asad, who led the Euphrates tribal opposition, insisted

that “we will never accept this heavy treaty” and that “Ja‘far al-‘Askarī. . . is *not an owner of lands as we are*.”[237] Obviously, the implication was that only an owner of lands had the right to bind and loosen for the country. Tribal chiefs, who supported British policies, were prone to think along similar lines. In 1922, in a remonstrance to the king, and in an unmistakable reference to the appointment as governors of nationalist ex-Sharīfian officers and as minister of commerce the nationalist leader and merchant Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman, forty pro-British shaikhs and aghas demanded, on the ground that “*we are the source of revenue* and. . . the interests of the state chiefly concern us and our tribes,” that the king should heed their advice and choose “for Government throughout the country only those who have the nobility of race and birth.”[238] if this remonstrance did not really mirror the convictions of the tribal leaders themselves, but of some Victorian-minded political officer, it at least suggests the ideas that were being imparted to them, ideas that they were to adopt as their own.

The conscious world of shaikh and agha was very circumscribed. It was the narrow, uninspiring world of an illiterate provincial landlord, whose chief obsession was to extract the uttermost *kaila*[239] of grain from his peasants. Of this world we have occasional glimpses from his rare contributions to the debates in Parliament. Usually he sat there without uttering a word, often with no notion of what was going on. Occasionally, however, a youthful and spirited deputy would throw down a mild challenge to his privileges, and this would bring him instantly to his feet. In 1933 a bill was introduced in Parliament to prevent peasants who were in debt to their landlord from leaving his farm, and to deny them other employment unless they had a document from him attesting that they were free from debt.[240] In the course of the debate on the bill, one of the deputies suggested that since there was a shortage of agricultural labor, and the landlord had, therefore, an interest in withholding the “free from debt” document, the law should protect the peasant by at least providing for his compensation by the landlord in the eventuality of his being unduly delayed. This suggestion disturbed Shaikh Salmān al-Barrāk of the Albū Sulṭān, who could not understand how it was possible “to restrict the landlord in this manner, to force him to compensate the peasant when this is not done in any of God’s lands!” Shaikh Ḥasan as-Suhail of Banī Tamīm rose to support him and expressed the stimulating opinion that “to impose

on the landlord the payment of a compensation to the peasant is to inflict on him an injustice!' 'Shaikh Zāmil al-Mannā' of the Ajwād was indignant. "I have never heard of such a thing"; he protested, "in no country in the world is the landlord expected to make amends to the peasant!"[241]

Political behavior is rarely unicausal. However, the pliancy of the tribal chiefs to British policies or their subservience to king or regent, or their participation in nationalist endeavors, were often at bottom no more than bids for the support of their private ambitions in land, that is, of their desire to preserve or add to their holdings, or to pull down land rivals, or to reverse unfavorable land decisions, or to secure preferential treatment in land revenue, or to escape revenue altogether. The big Tigris shaikhs of Kūt and ʻAmārah stood aloof from the 1920 uprising; backed the British Mandate; voted for the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930; were apathetic to the military movement of 1941 because the British government confirmed them in their large landholdings, granted them special privileges in the matter of land taxes, and assured them a virtual autonomy over their peasant tribesmen. It is also the implied or explicit threat to these holdings or privileges that explains their support of the monarchy in the forties and fifties, and their opposition to the *Wathbah*[242] of 1948 and the Revolution of 1958. The behavior of the "patriotic" tribal chiefs could largely be interpreted in similar terms. It is enough in this regard to refer to the history of Shaikh ʻAbdul-Wāḥid al-Ḥājj Sikar of al-Fatlah, who led the 1920 anti-British Shāmiyyah tribal rising and supported the "Rashīd ʻAlī movement" of 1941. The instinctive hatred of alien rule, the exhortations of Shīʻī men of religion, and a real taste for the old tribal freedoms no doubt contributed to ʻAbd-ul-Wāḥid's resolve in 1920 to drive the British out, but, like other landowners of Shāmiyyah, he had suffered heavily from the British maladministration of the Euphrates waters.[243] Moreover, his own crops were inundated in 1919 as a result of the opening–for reasons that are not clear–of the Kulaibī canal by the local British political officer.[244] Suggestive of the motivations of ʻAbd-ul-Wāḥid and his shaikhly following is their recurring complaint after the revolt that they had fought the British government but "gained no advantage," while men whom that government regarded with favor gathered "the fruits, . . . the honours, and vast tracts of land."[245] Actually, Shaikh ʻAbd-ul-Wāḥid lost to rivals in his own tribe the valuable estate of Rāk-al-Ḥaṣwah, to the recovery of which he afterwards

determinedly applied himself. Perceiving the chance of accomplishing his object and other things besides, he joined eager hands in 1930 with the Baghdād politicians Yāsīn al-Hāshimī and Rashīd ʻĀlī al-Gailānī. He became, indeed, their chief instrument in the tribal country, and in 1935, by working up an agitation in the mid-Euphrates, helped them to throw their political opponents out of power.[246] As his reward, he secured his coveted Rāk-al-Ḥaṣwah, only to be deprived of it two years later at the hands of the regime of General Bakr Ṣidqī.[247] This threw him once more into a rebellious state of mind. Soon enough he was buying arms for his tribesmen, and in May of 1937 reportedly approached the representatives of British power to obtain their blessing for an action against the government, but received no encouragement from them.[248] His arrest followed, but the destruction of Bakr Ṣidqī in August assured his eventual release. It was this background of resentment and disappointed hopes, and the benefits that a renewal of links with Rashīd ʻĀlī appeared to offer, rather than any affinity with nationalist aspirations, that drove Shaikh ʻAbd-ul-Wāḥid to cast in his lot with the 1941 movement–the last of his "patriotic" acts. He had, of course, to take the consequences. But after spending a few years in custody, he ended as an undistinguished supporter of the policies of Nūrī as-Saʻīd.

Land was also at the root of the politics of the restless Muntafiq shaikhs. The historic conflict between them and their hated absentee Saʻdūns landlords, the descendants of their formerly ruling family, persisted throughout the four decades of the Iraqi monarchy. The conflict was one of the few common factors in what otherwise was largely a heap of unrelated individualistic events. The Muntafiq shaikhs were a multitude, and hopelessly disunited. They seldom came together. Occasionally, however, they acted in unison in matters in which the Saʻdūns were also concerned. Thus in 1922, when, in an apparent answer to King Faiṣal's brief resistance to the British mandatory scheme, a movement for separating the provinces of Baṣrah and Muntafiq from the authority of Baghdād was set afoot, and leading Saʻdūns became associated with it, a large number of Muntafiq shaikhs rallied to the king and condemned "the foreigner-inspired attempt of traitors to dismember beloved Iraq."[249] They were not, it goes without saying, so much exercised for the integrity of the Iraqi kingdom as eager for what they thought was the chance of realizing their long-cherished hope of getting rid of their Saʻdūns landlords. One other matter could also bring

them to present a united front: the question of obtaining the rights of landlords over the government lands leased out to them. A demand to this effect, put forward in the Constituent Assembly of 1924, received the support of all the shaikh-deputies from the Muntafiq.[250] It is not without significance that the chiefs of the Gharrāf, who eventually obtained such rights, had no hand in the tribal risings of 1935-1936, while the smaller shaikhs of the lower Euphrates, having, as ever, lesser stakes, did not hesitate to lend themselves to the purposes of the plotter-politicians of the day.

It may not have escaped notice that the examples brought forth to illustrate the influence of the land question upon the political behavior of the tribal chiefs were all drawn from the twenties and thirties. The reason for this is that the pivot of politics in Iraq had by the following decade definitively shifted to Baghdād. The ease and grim rapidity with which Bakr Sidqā's soldiers and airplanes suppressed the tribal outbreaks of 1935 and 1936 presaged the end of the shaikh's era. Prior to this, Iraq's history was to a large extent the history of its shaikhs and their tribes. Its problems, its convulsions, its politics were essentially tribal. Even the 1920 "nationalist" revolt was at bottom a shaikhs' affair. Baghdād's only contributions to it were pamphlets, demonstrations, and some clandestine correspondence. There were no nationalist tinges to complicate the risings in the mid-thirties of underprivileged shaikhdom. In these risings were only the too-obvious fingers of ambitious Baghdād politicians or, more appropriately, the Baghdād "tribal politicians," a phenomenon that the "tribal era" could not but have engendered. They were "tribal" not by their social origin, but in the sense that they thought and intrigued in terms of the shaikhs and the tribes. Their medium to power was the shaikh, and their medium to the shaikh was primarily the land, that is, the satisfaction of the shaikh's appetite for land. The nationalists of this period were also in a way "tribal nationalists," for what was "nationalist" about the 1920 revolt except the attempt of the numerically insignificant nationalists to use the tribes for nationalist ends? After the thirties, the towns came conclusively into their own. The history of Iraq became henceforth largely the history of Baghdād, and its arresting feature the transient but recurring sovereignty of the masses of the capital city. It was now these urban masses and not the tribes that caused the downfall of cabinets, as happened in the *Wathbah* of 1948

and the *Intifāḍah* of 1952.[251] In the tribal countryside, only small local risings broke from time to time the reigning uneasy quiescence–risings not under the shaikhs, as in the previous decades, but against them.[252] In this urban and rural popular unrest, the monarchy and the shaikhs discovered their common interests, and coalesced in the hope of withstanding the mounting threat to their position and privileges. Their close alliance made all the more certain that the 1958 Revolution, by destroying the monarchy, should seal the fate of shaikhdom.

The foregoing sketchy account does not presume to present a history of the political behavior of the shaikhs. Its only object has been to draw attention to the importance in that history of the shaikhs' intense interest in consolidating and intensifying their hold on the land.

That the principal shaikhs and aghas and their families were landowners on a huge scale should be clear from Tables 4-2, 5-3, and 5-4. These tables, however, leave out of account the large tracts of government land that tribal chiefs held in law by lease, a form of tenure that prior to 1932 prevailed widely in the tribal country, but in 1958 mainly in ʻAmārah. This is a province that until the forties was one of the richest in Iraq. It also provided a chief anchor for big shaikhdom throughout the period of the monarchy. More than that, as a result in part of its agrarian peculiarities, its peasant-tribesmen played a significant role in modern Iraqi history.[253] For these reasons an examination in some detail of certain salient features of its land system is in order.

The concentration of the land of ʻAmārah in relatively few hands antedated the British occupation [see Table 6-4]. In 1906 there were only 19 landholders in this province, of whom 17 were shaikhs and, of these, 5 accounted for 64 percent of the total amount of rent charged by the Ottoman authorities (see Tables 6-5 and 6-6). Three of the five were blood relations: Shaikh Ṣaihūd ibn Manshad was the uncle of Shaikh ʻAraibī ibn Wādī, and the father of Fāliḥ ibn Ṣaihūd. To their tribe, the Albū Muḥammad, belonged also three other intermediate landholders.

TABLE 6-4

Number and Category of Landholders ‘Amārah Province in the Period 1906-1951

Total Population of Province in 1947[a]	307,021
Total Estimated Cultivated Area in 1930[b]	2,672,000 dūnums*
Total Area of Landholdings in 1944[c]	3,647,792 dūnums
Total Area of Landholdings in 1951[d]	3,422,733 dūnums

Year	Total number of landholders	Shaikhs	Sādah	Townsmen	Mullah†
1906[e]	19	17		1	1
1918[f]	33	29	3	1	
1921[g]	43	37	5	1	
1929[h]	81	55	7	18	1
1944[c]	181	148▲		33	
1951[d]	177	144▲		33	

*One dūnum equals 0.618 acre.

†A man learned in religion.

▲This number comprises shaikhs and *sādah*.

Sources:

[a]Official 1947 census.

[b]Sir Ernest Dowson, *An Inquiry into Land Tenure and Related Questions* (Letchworth, 1931), p. 11.

[c]Governor of ‘Amārah, unpublished report of 9 May 1944, “The Method of Direct Leasing and its Detrimental Effect on the Province of ‘Amārah” (in Arabic).

[d]Unpublished 1952 report on ‘Amārah landholdings, Baghdād Internal Security Library.

[e]Great Britain, Foreign Office, letter of 9 June 1908, from Consul General Ramsay, Baghdād, to Mr. G. Barclay, *Further Correspondence Respecting Affairs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia, July-September 1908*, pp. 51-52.

[f]Great Britain, Arab Bureau, *Tribes of the Tigris*, pp. 1, 4, 10-11, 19, and 24; and *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 315-316.

[g]Great Britain, *Administration Report of ‘Amārah for 1920-21*, pp. 5 and 19-24.

[h]Unpublished report of the administrative inspector of ‘Amārah for August 1929.

TABLE 6-5

Rent Paid on Government or Crown Lands by the Biggest Shaikhs of ‘Amārah in 1906

Tribe	*Shaikh*	*Rent in Turkish līras*[a]	*Rent in rupees*[b]
Albū Muḥammad	ʻAraibī ibn Wādī	37,000	4,38,518
Albū Muḥammad	Ṣaihūd ibn Manshad	24,000	2,84,444
Banī Lām	Ghadbān ibn Bunayyah	10,300	1,22,074
Sawāʻad	Baddāi ibn Muchaisir	10,000	1,18,519
Albū Muḥammad	Fāliḥ ibn Ṣaihūd	9,500	1,12,593
Total		90,800	10,76,148
Total rent paid by all landholders in ʻAmārah province		141,300	16,74,666
Percentage		64%	

[a]The figures, which are "approximately correct," were compiled from "private sources." One Turkish līra equalled 100 piastres, and 112.5 piastres exchanged for one pound sterling in Iraq's money market around the turn of the century.

[b]One rupee equalled Is. 6d.

Source: Great Britain, Foreign Office, letter of 9 June 1908 from Consul General Ramsay, Baghdād, to Mr. G. Barclay, *Further Correspondence Respecting Affairs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia, July-September 1908*, pp. 51-52.

Nonetheless, the land tenure policy of the Turks differed in an essential manner from that of the English: unlike the English, the Turks frequently redistributed the land between the various members of the ruling tribal families. For example, between 1865 and 1915 the Majarr al-Kabīr, one of the largest and richest estates of ʻAmārah, was reallotted nine times, and Shahālah, another important estate, seven times.[254] On the other hand, between 1916 and 1958 Majarr al-Kabīr remained in the hands of one and the same shaikh, Majīd al-Khalīfah,[255] and the only changes in the Shahālah were, first, its division in 1923 between Shaikh Muhammad al-ʻAraibī, the original lessee, and Shaikh Fāliḥ aṣ-Ṣaihūd,[256] and, second, the succession, after Shaikh Fāliḥ's death, of his son to his portion of the farm. Such practices illustrate the contrast between the Turkish propensity to undermine the big tribal chiefs and the English determination to shore them up.

TABLE 6-6

Distribution of Rent Paid on Government and Crown Lands by the ʻAmārah Landholders in 1906

Category of rent	No. of landholders	Stratum				% of total rent of all landholders
		Shaikhs	Sādah	Townsman	Mullah[a]	
Less than 10,000 rupees[b]	0					
From 10,001 to 20,000 rupees	3	3				10%
20,001 30,000 rupees	4	3			1	
30,001 40,000 rupees	1	1				26%
40,001 60,000 rupees	4	4				
60,001 90,000 rupees	1			1		
90,001 100,000 rupees	1	1				
100,001 300,000 rupees	4	4				38%
300,001 440,000 rupees	1	1				26%
Total	19	17	0	1	1	100%

[a]A man learned in religion.

[b]The amount, given in the original list of rent payers in Turkish līras, has been converted into rupees at 11 rupees 13 annas for every līra, the rate of exchange in effect at around the turn of the century.

Source: List of ʻAmārah rent payers enclosed with letter of 9 June 1908, from Consul General Ramsay, Baghdād, to Mr. G. Barclay, Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Further Correspondence Respecting Affairs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia, July-September 1908*, pp. 51-52.

It is true that in the English period the landholding class widened; the number of lessees increased from thirty-three in 1918 to eighty-one in 1929 (see Table 6-4). But part of the increase is explained by the redistribution of some estates to make room for a number of "landless shaikhs" who had lost their leases through joining the Turks in World War I, and had afterwards succeeded in restoring themselves to favor.[257] Moreover, as one of the British political officers of ʻAmārah pointed out, "the townspeople and *sirkāls*. . . feel and rightly, I think, that under our rule the shaikhs . . . have under their control far more land than they had in Turkish times."[258] Over and above this, the degree of concentration of land or income at the upper end of the scale intensified. In 1906 only one shaikh, in 1921 two shaikhs, and in 1929 five shaikhs paid to the government rents of more than 300,000 rupees (see Tables 6-6, 6-7, and 6-8). Or, to put it differently, whereas in 1906 5 percent of the landholders accounted for 26 percent of the total payments due to the government, in 1921 43 percent and in 1929 61 percent of the whole amount came from 4 and 6 percent of the landholders, respectively.

No complete information is available on how the rent payable by each shaikh was computed. In theory, the amount of the annual government share in the early years of the English occupation was supposed to represent one-fourth of the winter and one-half of the summer crops.[259] Wheat and barley,

grown as a rule in the northern districts of ‘Amārah and in the main by the tribe of Banī Lām, constituted the predominant winter crops. Rice, the principal summer food-grain, was cultivated in the richer southern districts, chiefly by the tribes of Azairij and Albū Muhammad. In practice, in the matter of revenue, the big shaikhs were not only underassessed but also unequally treated, the more prominent ones being shown undue favor for reasons of policy.[260] One example should suffice. In the estate of Shahālah, which was leased out to Shaikh Muhammad al-‘Araibī of Albū Muḥammad, about 18,000 acres were used for paddy, according to an estimate given in 1918 by the deputy director of irrigation, Tigris. At the same time, the average yield of an acre of rice was conservatively put at 1,400 lbs. or five-eighths of a ton.[261] Assuming a normal 1919 crop, the total yield of Shahālah at this rate would have been in that year about 11,250 tons. In fact, in 1919 the summer crops in ‘Amārah were “better than usual.[262] Anyhow, in the same year in this province rice sold at prices that ranged between 266 and 439 rupees a ton.[263] Shahālah must have accordingly produced a minimum income of 29,92,500 rupees; but only 3,56,000 rupees went to the government as rent, or a maximum proportion of 12 percent. This on the one hand. On the other hand, in the case of the estate of Abū Ḥallānah, which had been subdivided into three and leased out to lesser tribal chiefs, the principle of two-thirds of the farm’s gross income to government and one-third to the shaikh was applied.[264] Although from 1921 onwards the assessments of the bigger tribal landholders were progressively increased (consult Tables 6-7 and 6-9), they continued to be preferentially treated at least until 1927,[265] or perhaps up to 1929. A secret ruling, adopted in 1926 upon the initiative of the high commissioner and applicable for a period of three years, had provided for the calculation of the sum payable to the state by the rice-producing shaikhs of ‘Amārah on the basis of a net demand of 7 rupees and 10 annas per dūnum of rice.[266] Inasmuch as the average yield of rice in this province was about 400 kilos per dūnum,[267] and the wholesale price of one ton of rice in 1928 ranged from 110 to 180 rupees, a dūnum of rice must have produced, assuming normal conditions, a minimum income of about 44 rupees. In other words, the share of the government could not have exceeded 15 percent in the year just mentioned if the ruling under reference remained in force. The ruling may, however, have been superseded by the Agricultural Lands (Rates of

Government Demand) Law No. 42 of 1927, which fixed the portion due to government on its unalienated lands at a maximum of 30 percent and a minimum of 11 percent, depending on the means of irrigation used, the efficiency of water feeding, the fertility of the soil, and distance from the market–the rich flow-irrigated rice lands being subject to a cold 30 percent.[268] Be that as it may, the amounts that the five biggest rice shaikhs of ‘Amārah had to meet in 1929 are shown in Table 6-10. The relative enormity of their own income can be gathered from the fact that their combined demand of 17,56,980 rupees was almost equal to the land revenue contributed to the treasury in 1928 by five of Iraq’s fourteen provinces whose total payments, as is evident from Table 6-10, came to 18,23,054 rupees.

TABLE 6-7

Land Revenue Demand of the Biggest Shaikhs of ‘Amārah Province in 1920 and 1921

(in rupees[a])

Tribe	*Shaikh*	*Land revenue demand in 1920*	*Land revenue demand in 1921*
Albū Muḥammad	Muḥammad al-‘Araibī	3,56,000	4,12,000
Albū Muḥammad	Majīd al-Khalīfah	3,13,220	3,63,220
Azairij	Salmān al-Manshad	1,53,404	1,88,404
Azairij	Shawwāi al-Fahad	1,53,404	1,88,404
Albū Muḥammad	‘Uthmān al-Yāsir	1,21,125	[b]
Total		10,97,153	11,52,028
Total land revenue demand of ‘Amārah province		15,91,731	17,72,606
Percentage		68%	65%

[a]One rupee equals Is. 6d.

[b]This shaikh’s estate was halved in 1921, and his revenue demand for that year was only 56,000 rupees.

Source: Great Britain, *Administration Report of the ‘Amārah Division for the Year 1920-21*, pp. 13 and 28.

TABLE 6-8

Distribution of Land Revenue Demand of ‘Amārah Landholders in 1929

Category of revenue demand	No. of landholders	Stratum				% of total revenue demand
		Shaikhs	Sādah	Townsmen	Mullah[a]	
Less than 1,000 rupees[b]	8	3		5		
From 1,001 to 2,000 rupees	3	2		1		
2,001 5,000 rupees	13	6	1	6		22%
5,001 10,000 rupees	14	6	5	3		
10,001 20,000 rupees	21	17	1	2	1	
20,001 30,000 rupees	7	6		1		
30,001 40,000 rupees	6	6				17%
60,001 90,000 rupees	4	4				
300,001 400,000 rupees	5	5				61%
Total	81	55	7	18	1	100%

[a]A man learned in religion.

[b]"One rupee equals Is. 6d.

Source: List of revenue payers annexed to the unpublished report of the administrative inspector of ʻAmārah for August 1929.

TABLE 6-9

The Land Revenue Demand of the Big and Middling Shaikhs of ʻAmārah Province in 1929

(total number of landholders: 81)

Tribe	Shaikh	Revenue demand in rupees[a]	% of total revenue demand
Big shaikhs			
Albū Muḥammad	Majīd al-Khalīfah	3,92,700	
Azairij	Salmān al-Manshad	3,69,185	
Azairij	Shawwāi al-Fahad	3,69,185	
Albū Muḥammad	Muḥammad al-ʻAraibī	3,17,660	
Albū Muḥammad	Fālih aṣ-Ṣaihūd	3,08,250	
		17,56,980	61%
Middling shaikhs			
Banī Lām	Kammandār al-Fahad	85,500	
Albū Muḥammad	Ḥumūd al-Khalīfah	74,000	
Albū Muḥammad	Ḥātim aṣ-Ṣaihud	68,000	
Albū Muḥammad	Ṭāhir al-Ḥātim	60,060	
Banī Lām	Juwī al-Lāzim	38,000	
Banī Lām	Ghadbān al-Bunayyah	38,000	
Albū Muḥammad	Challūb az-Zabūn	37,800	
Sūdān	Shamūkh al-Fāris	34,450	
Banī Lām	Shibīb al-Mizbān	31,000	
Albū Darrāj	Muṭashshar al-Faiṣal	30,800	
		4,97,610	17%

[a]One rupee equals Is. 6d.

Source: List of revenue payers annexed to the unpublished report of the administrative inspector of ʻAmārah for the month of August 1929.

TABLE 6-10

The Land Revenue Demand of the Five Biggest Shaikhs of ‘Amārah Compared with the Land Revenue Payments of Five of Iraq’s Twelve Provinces in 1928-1929

Total 1929 land revenue demand of the five biggest shaikhs of ‘Amārah province[a]	17,56,980 rupees[b]
1928 land revenue payments by the provinces of	
Arbīl	5,03,633 rupees
Kirkūk	4,84,525 rupees
Sulaimāniyyah	3,59,969 rupees
Dulaim	2,73,348 rupees
Karbalā’	2,01,579 rupees
Total for the five provinces	18,23,054 rupees[c]

[a]See Table 6-9.

[b]One rupee equals Is. 6d.

[c]*Source:* Iraq, *Annual Report of the Operations of the Revenue Department of the Ministry of Finance for the Financial Year 1928-1929*, pp. 30-31.

By comparison with the shaikhs, the townsmen and tribal *sādah* of ‘Amārah were small landholders, as should be clear from Table 6-8. The townsmen were predominantly of the class of urban capitalists, who in this province were referred to as the *kabbāniyyah*. They intruded into landholding, as Table 6-11 suggests, largely by investing in pressure pumps, taking advantage of the cheapness of fuel oil and of fiscal privileges– including the exemption from the government share for four consecutive seasons, under a law passed in 1926, of all produce accruing through the use of pumps in respect of virgin land or the increase of produce due to such use in respect of land already under the plough.[269]

If, from the point of view of revenue, the shaikhs of ‘Amārah were in the English period underassessed, after 1932 they tended increasingly to regard themselves as a disadvantaged group: the government continued to demand rent from them, whereas in other provinces it granted *lazmah* or *ṭāpū* rights

in state land and eventually so altered the method of taxation as to free the holders of these rights from any but the lightest fiscal charges.[270] But the discrimination against the ‘Amārah and the remnant lessees of government land in other regions became largely nominal after the mid-forties. This is because many of them simply failed to meet the stipulated demand. Thus in the financial year 1949, the total amount due as rent on government lands was 874,552 dīnārs.[271] Of this, only 21 percent was realized, the ‘Amārah lessees being responsible for 669,000 dīnārs of the arrears.[272]

TABLE 6-11

Pump Ownership in the Province of ‘Amārah in 1929

Total number of pumps	105
Number owned by shaikhs	61
Number owned in shaikh-sayyid partnership	2
Number owned by *sādah*	9
Number owned in shaikh-townsman partnership	3
Number owned by townsmen	30

Source: Based on a list of pump proprietors annexed to the unpublished report of the administrative inspector of ‘Amārah for the month of August 1929.

TABLE 6-12

Distribution of Landholdings in ‘Amārah Province in 1944

(total area of landholdings: 3,647,792 dūnums[a])

Size of landholding			No. of landholders
From	12 to	100 dūnums	9
	101	1,000 dūnums	29
	1,001	10,000 dūnums	93
	10,001	30,000 dūnums	32
	30,001	50,000 dūnums	2
	50,001	100,000 dūnums	9
	100,001	400,000 dūnums	7
Total			181

[a]One dūnum equals 0.618 acre.

Source: Governor of ‘Amārah, unpublished report dated 9 May 1944 and entitled *Tarīqat-ul-‘Uqūd-il-Mubāshirah wa Ta’thīruha-s-Sayyi’ ‘ala Liwā‘-il-‘Amārah* (“The Method of Direct Leasing and Its Detrimental Effect on the Province of ‘Amārah”), P. 5.

Otherwise, there was no fundamental change in the agrarian situation. Although by 1944 the number of landholders had increased to 181, and the number of landholding townsmen to 33 (see Table 6-4), the high degree of concentration of land in the hands of the big shaikhs remained unbroken. In that year seven shaikhs held each between 100,001 and 400,000 dūnums and nine others between 50,001 and 100,000 dūnums (see Table 6-12). Again, in 1951 eight shaikhly families held 53 percent, and eighteen other shaikhs another 19 percent of the total area in holdings. But, as is evident from Table 6-13, the shaikhs or families with the largest estates in the year just mentioned were not the shaikhs or families that paid the highest rents in 1929. Clearly, the productivity of the estate, and not its size, determined the income and therefore the significance of its holder, and it was a matter of common knowledge that the estates of the chiefs of the Albū Muḥammad and Azairij were the richest in ‘Amārah, or at least had been so until the migration of many of their tribesmen to Baghdād or other towns. Another point worth noting is that the greater number of the big estates (the estates marked with an asterisk in Table 6-13) had, since the beginning of the British occupation, remained in the hands of the same shaikh or passed, after his death, to his sons,[273] although there were changes in the size of some estates and other estates underwent simply a change in name, so that the holdings of the big shaikhs, even if classified in law as rented state lands, tended in fact to acquire the character of semiprivate property. Sons inherited, so to say, the land leases from their fathers. One other thing needs to be brought out: the lands of the same shaikh were not dispersed or separated by great distances, but compact and invariably in the same district.

TABLE 6-13

The Big and Middling Shaikhs of ‘Amārah Province in 1951

Summary of the 1951 landholding situation in ʻAmārah	
Total area of landholdings	3,422,733 dūnums[a]
Total number of landholders	177
Three shaikhs and sons of four other shaikhs held	1,824,841 dūnums or 53% of total area
Ten other shaikhs held	689,561 dūnums or 19% of total area

Tribe	*Shaikh*	*Area of estate in dūnums*	*Name of estate*	*District*	*1929 revenue demand*[b]
Albū Muḥammad	Majīd al-Khalīfah and sons	136,229	al-Majarr al-Kabīr*	al-Majarr al-Kabīr	4,95,700[c]
Albū Muḥammad	Muḥammad al-ʻAraibī	66,236	al-Kaḥlā'[d]*	al-Kaḥlā'	3,17,660
Albū Muḥammad	Ṭāhir al-Ḥātim	44,599	Kasrah and Jamshah	Qalʻat Ṣāliḥ	60,060
Albū Muḥammad	Ḥātim aṣ-Ṣaihūd	33,817	Baḥāthah*	al-Kaḥlā'	68,000
Azairij	Sons of Shawwāi al-Fahad	148,450	al-Majarr aṣ-Ṣaghīr*	al-Majarr aṣ-Ṣaghīr	3,69,185
Azairij	Mutlaq as-Salmān, son of Salmān al-Manshad	72,688	al-Majarr aṣ-Ṣaghīr*	al-Majarr aṣ-Ṣaghīr	3,69,185
Banī Lām	Sons of ʻAlwān aj-Jindīl	138,312	Umm al-Ḥanna and Umm al-Baram*	Shaikh Saʻd	20,125
Banī Lām	Ḥātim al-Ghadbān	90,759	—	Al-Kumait	38,000
Banī Lām	Yaʻqūb al-Yūsuf	96,242	al-Ghuraibah al-Gharbiyyah*	Shaikh Saʻd	15,500
Banī Lām	Dhiyāb Aj-Janb Saʻīd	66,868	al-Ghuraibah ash-Sharqiyyah*	Shaikh Saʻd	13,000
Banī Lām	Shabīb al-Mizbān	51,621	al-Majzarah*	ʻAmārah	31,000
Banī Lām	Kamandār al-Fahad	65,602	al-Fahdiyyah*	ʻAlī Gharbī	85,500
Banī Lām	Sons of Kunfadh al-Mozān	129,140	al-Kraimah*	ʻAlī Gharbī	13,250
Banī Lām	Manāti' al-Faʻal	79,704	al-Ḥarqāniyyah*	ʻAlī Gharbī	13,250
Albū Darrāj	Sons of Muḥammad Ḥaṭṭāb	375,603	Bughailāt and Jifjāfah	Kumait	18,030
Albū Darrāj	Sons of al-Faiṣal	238,678	Kumait*	Kumait	30,800
Banī Saʻīd	Mazīd al-Ḥamdān as-Sikar	399,726	Ruwaidah and Shaṭṭāniyyah	al-Majarr aṣ-Ṣaghīr	21,400
Banī Saʻīd	Fālih Abū ʻAujah	258,703	Isle of Sayyid Aḥmad ar-Rifāʻī*	al-Majarr aṣ-Ṣaghīr	6,650

*Estates that remained in the hands of the same shaikh, or his sons, since the beginning of British occupation.

[a]One dūnum equals 0.618 acre.

[b]The 1929 revenue demand was that of the same shaikh or of his father or of a relative, and generally but not invariably applicable to the same estate.

[c]Includes the revenue demand of Majīd, Humūd, and Mushaṭṭaṭ al-Khalīfah.

[d]This estate was part of the old Shahālah.

Source: Unpublished report on ʻAmārah landholdings dated 1952 and found by this writer in the Baghdād Security Library.

It remains to mention that a law, passed in 1952, sought to convert the ʻAmārah state lands into private *lazmah* holdings but, being heavily weighted in favor of the shaikhly class, provoked resistance from the side of the rank-and-file tribesmen in the Azairij country,[274] and in 1954 had to be

annulled. A new law, enacted in 1955, provided for the distribution of half of the cultivated land to the peasantry,[275] but by the outbreak of the 1958 Revolution had been given only slight effect.

What were the implications of the land system and the continuance of the shaikh and agha for society?

Two contradictory features marked the agrarian history of the last two decades of the monarchy: an abundance of undeveloped cultivable land[276] on the one hand, and a desertion of the countryside by great numbers of peasants on the other. It cannot, of course, be maintained that this contradiction was due solely to the workings of shaikhly institutions. For one thing, the movement to the towns continued after the Revolution of 1958. For another, the relation of many of the peasants to the land has never been strong and sustained, by reason of their relatively recent origin as nomadic wanderers. The recurring floods and droughts, the salination of the soil, and, in some regions, the drying up of river branches also contributed to the uncertainty of agriculture. Moreover, as in other societies, city life was not without its attractions to rural people. All the same, a basic explanation for the scale and pace of the movement in the decades in question was that the land production relationships and the attendant social and economic conditions were impoverishing agriculture and, in the originating areas most acutely affected, no longer conducive to a tolerable peasant life.

According to the official census of 1957, the number of persons who in that year lived in but had been born outside the province of Baghdād was 378,996. They formed 29 percent of its inhabitants. The corresponding figure and proportion for the province of Baṣrah were 88,819 and 18 percent. Of the 378,996 non-Baghdādis, 114,708, or 30 percent, had moved from the ‘Amārah country, and 41,340, or 10 percent, from Kūt. The stream of migrants to the metropolitan districts from the other provinces was less copious. Of the 88,819 non-Baṣrites, 48 percent had come from ‘Amārah and 21 percent from Muntafiq.[277] Obviously, the provinces that lost most heavily, at least from the movement to Iraq’s chief city and its seaport, were the provinces in which the concentration of shaikhly holdings was most extreme. But the rural-urban migration was general: the capital town of

every province grew at the expense of villages, not to mention the drift of laboring people to Kuwait.

That the movement from the countryside was, as early as 1933, a serious problem is clear from the attempt which was made in that year to tie the peasant to the land, and which found expression in the Rights and Duties of Cultivators' Law No. 28. The crucial clause of this legislative act provided for the immobilization of the farmhands that were in debt to their landlord. But in Iraq, as a 1931 British official report maintained,

> there are few *fallāḥs* [peasants] who are not in debt. The origin of the indebtedness lay in the fact that when the *fallāḥ* was first engaged he had to have something to live on until the harvest. When the harvest was divided he was supposed to pay back what he had borrowed but sometimes was unable to do so owing to the failure of crops and sometimes he deferred payment with the consent of the farmer.[278]

Clearly, Law No. 28 of 1933 promised genuine serfdom for the peasant but, fortunately for him, it has never been the custom in Iraq to enforce laws wholeheartedly, and anyhow legal enactments could not in the long run have checked a movement that social reality itself impelled.

In a period of only ten years–1947 to 1957–no fewer than 205,765 persons migrated to the Baghdād province alone.[279] The impact on a country like Iraq of a movement on such a scale and at such a pace can be imagined. It unbalanced the economy, drained away the strength of many rural districts, and made the capital city top-heavy with people and problems.

At a preceding point in this work it was parenthetically mentioned that ʻAmārah played an important role in the modern history of Iraq. The grounds for this remark must by now be partly evident, for in the development being described, ʻAmārah's share was decisive. Thanks to its migrants or to the *Shurūgīs* or *Shargāwiyyas*, "the Easterners," as Baghdādis call them, there was, so to say, something of an " ʻAmārization" of Baghdād and, to a lesser extent, of Baṣrah. This process affected many aspects of the life of the capital.

In the first place, the *Shurūgīs* transferred to it part of their landscape: in 1956 there were 16,413 *ṣarīfas* grouped in nine districts of Greater Baghdād. These *ṣarīfas* were one-roomed huts built of reeds and mats and

covered with mud during the winter. They housed each an average of 5.6 persons, and in the aggregate 92,173 people.[280] Only a part of the migrants lived in them. The others crowded themselves into the congested interior areas of the city, or had shelter in other types of mud dwellings.[281] As a rule, the *Shurūgīs* set up their *ṣarīfas* in waste land. Otherwise they would have had to pay rent which they could not afford. A group of their huts, surveyed in 1952 by Dr. A. Critchley of the Baghdād Medical School, had for site an area which was used as a dumping ground for human and animal excreta and rubbish by the Baghdād municipality and by private individuals. Some of the surface water drains of the city were also pumped into the area so that the polluted liquid flowed through the cluster of *ṣarīfas*. Dr. Critchley found the huts "badly ventilated, overcrowded, with no privacy, and frequently housing the domestic animals as well as the family." "There were," he added, "no sanitary arrangements in the *ṣarīfas* or in the district. . . . the inhabitants simply defecated indiscriminately.... There was also no supply of pure drinking water so it had to be carried in from outside the zone and stored in a 'hib'." The usual furniture was a crude chest, a few cooking utensils, and one bed on which was piled the bedding for the rest of the family, who slept on the floor. Every morsel of food that these people ate was thought to be polluted, and the infant death rate per 1,000 pregnancies was found to be 341.[282] Obviously, such conditions of living were not only detrimental to the health of the *ṣarīfa* inhabitants, but also imperiled the people of Baghdād.

No tangible measures were taken under the monarchy to alleviate the sufferings of the *ṣarīfa* dwellers. As late as February of 1958, the minister of social affairs could only declare that the government had arrived at the "best solution" to their problem, and this was to divide them into three categories: the families of soldiers, the families of policemen, and the others. "The first two categories are serving the government and will have eventually their own houses. The others will be transferred far from the city as required under public health rulings. "[283]

This discrimination brings into focus another aspect of the 'Amārah movement. It has always been a baffling thing how in a country where a profound chasm separates the government from the people, the ruling class can still command the obedience of its police or other armed forces, particularly when it issues orders to fire on the people in moments of mass

uprisings, as happened in Iraq in January 1948 and November 1952. Are not the rank and file of the police themselves part of the people, and share with them their suffering and discontent? This feature of unpopular rule will perhaps never be completely explained, and a probing here into the multiple causes that may account for it would only carry the discussion astray. The share that the ʻAmārah tribesmen had in the coercive work of the monarchy is of sole interest at this point. In brief, the police force of Baghdād was to no little degree " ʻAmārized," lending a particular character to what became in the later stages of the monarchic regime a classic instrument of coercion. There had never been much affinity between tribesmen and townsmen, largely due to the absence of any past genuine contact between the two groups. The only townsman that the average tribesman had known was the trader or usurer–and both were not particularly exemplary specimens of townsmanship-so that the quality he had grown to associate with townsfolk was that of sophisticated greed. When he moved to Baghdād, he did not mix much with its people except in his new place of work. Otherwise, and by force of circumstance, he isolated himself in his *ṣarīfas* in particular outlying districts of the city, where he also had his coffee-house and social gatherings. The urban laborer, for his part, had not welcomed him, for he could only have seen in him a competitor for the little bread that he was earning at such expense to the little health left in his emaciated body.[284] It is not a matter for surprise that the monarchic regime, in the predicament in which it found itself in the forties and fifties–faced, as it was, by the increasing hostility of the city populace–should not have been reluctant to put to its own uses this social distance that separated tribesmen and townsmen. On the other hand, the absorption of a large number of the ʻAmārah migrants into the police could also be explained by the natural working of economic forces: the *shurūgīs* were in great supply and inexpensive. Moreover, it should be remembered that in time the *shurūgīs* that did not serve the government followed the Communists and came to figure conspicuously in popular upheavals, but against them the government did not have to use their own tribal kinsmen. This goes without saying.

In the many months that I spent on my research in the Baghdād Security Library, I had a chance of meeting a number of these ʻAmārah policemen who were on guard duty, and after months of acquaintance I cautiously and

indirectly broached with them this matter of the ability of the government to use one part of the people against the other. I give here the answer of one of them because it typifies so poignantly the responses of the rest. "*Ammī*,"[285] he said, "we have to make a living. . . A few months ago a man murdered his neighbour near our *ṣarīfa* because he had missed two tomatoes from his hut.... '*Ammī*, . . . whoever gives me food and something to put on is my father.!"

To what extent pauperism wore away the pride of many of the peasant tribesmen could be inferred from their readiness in the fifties to do any manual work in the city, no matter how humble, when only a few decades earlier any such work apart from ploughing the field was considered a disgrace and an abomination. In several instances, tribesmen, who had been forced during the British occupation to build military roads, refused on completion of the work to take money or any payment, pleading that if they did so they would put themselves on the same footing as hired laborers.

Common pauperism had not by 1958 created any enduring common feeling between the *ṣarīfa* dwellers and the city workers. Only briefly, at moments of great social stress, and upon the conscious initiative of the Communists, did they come together. Mutual suffering does not spontaneously generate mutual sympathy. Left to itself, misery, even if generally shared, only unsocializes man. It benumbs his social instincts, makes him insensitive of others, and bends him more and more upon himself.

Another effect of the inflow of peasants into Baghdād was the rapid expansion of its unskilled labor force, which had been even antecedently in abundant supply. The coming of the *shurūgīs* must have, therefore, depressed further the level of living of the poorer wage earners by forcing their wage rates downwards, or bringing unemployment or underemployment to many in their ranks.

It is difficult to assess, in any precise manner, the impact of the peasant movement on city workmen. In the first place, there has been no study, in quantitative or analytical terms, of changes over the years in labor conditions or labor earnings, or of the incidence or duration of unemployment. In the second place, workers, engaged in the same type of work, received in the same period dissimilar wages in different parts of the country. And third, other forces were at play–the depression of the late

twenties and early thirties, and the inflation of the forties and fifties, among others–and their effects on the cost of living have only been inadequately ascertained. The data assembled in Table 6-14 can, therefore, provide nothing more than a rough and indirect idea of the influence of the migrations on the income of the working class. It is clear from the table, however, that the daily wage rates of unskilled labor were in the thirties on a downward move in comparison with the twenties, the average market rate being 75 fils[286] in 1926, 56 fils in 1930, and 50 fils in 1935 and 1937. While the change in 1930 may be explained by the depression of 1929 and the related drop in the price of staple foods, it is significant that the wages of skilled workers remained unaffected–but this class of men was always scarce. No inference could be drawn from the further deterioration of the wage level of unskilled workpeople in 1935 and 1937 in the absence of figures on trends in the cost of living. For the succeeding two decades, however, the government compiled an index showing the rise since 1939 in the retail prices of the kind of food, clothing, and other items used by a "typical" family of unskilled laborers (see Table 17-2). On the basis of this index and assuming its reliability, workhands, who in 1939 earned 50 fils a day, should have received in 1948, if they were to maintain their 1939 standard of living, 336 fils, the cost of living having increased by 673 percent; but the average wage rate in 1948 was only "about" 200 fils. Again, if in 1939 the daily wage rates ranged from 40 to 60 fils, in 1953 they should have ranged from 196 to 294 fils, given the 1953 cost of living index number of 490. But a confidential report, prepared by the International Labour Office, maintained that from data furnished by the government to their expert, and from such spot checks as he himself was able to make, it appeared to him that in that year "no considerable body of male urban unskilled workers received a wage of less than 200 fils a day while the majority probably received between 200 and 250 fils," and that "taking into account the cost of living, numbers of wage earners must be living at or near subsistence

TABLE 6-14

Labor Wages, 1914-1953

Year	Category of rate	Daily wage of unskilled labor (in fils)*	Increase over 1939	Daily wage of skilled labor (in fils)*
1914[a]	General rates	25 to 33		42 to 83
1926[b]	Baṣrah Port	75		187 to 435
	Turkish Petroleum Co.	75 to 92		300 to 450
	Usual market rate	75		
1930[c]	Baṣrah Port	60		187 to 435
	Iraq̇ Petroleum Co.	75		300 to 450
	Baghdād market rate	37 to 75		
1935[d]	General rates	40 to 60 (adult) 10 to 40 (child)		
1937[e]	Average rate	50		
1939[f]	Average rate	50		
1942[g]	General rates	40 to 75		150 to 500
1948[h]	Average rate	"about" 200	"about" 400%	
1953[i]	Baghdād general rates	"less than" 200 to 250	"less than" 400% to 500%	500 to 1200

*1000 fils = 1 dīnār = £1.

Sources:

[a]Great Britain, Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Mesopotamia* (London, 1920), p. 69. Wages were given in Grand Seigneur piastres and in pence, and have been converted at the rate of 8-1/3 fils or 2d. per piastre.

[b]Great Britain, *Report . . . on the Administration of Iraq for 1926*, p. 29. Wages were given in rupees and have been converted at the rate of 75 fils per rupee.

[c]Great Britain, *Report . . . on Progress of Iraq, 1920-1931*, pp. 245-246.

[d]Great Britain, Department of Overseas Trade, *Economic Conditions in Iraq 1933-1935* (London, 1936), p. 30.

[e]Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf*, p. 475.

[f]Inference by this writer from figures for preceding and succeeding years.

[g]Hāshim Jawād, *Ahwāl-ul-'Amal wa-l-'Umāl fi-l-'Iraq* ("The Conditions of Work and of Workers in Iraq") (Baghdād, 1942), p. 22.

[h]Great Britain, Overseas Economic Surveys, *Iraq* (June 1949), p. 28.

[i]For the wage rates of unskilled labor, International Labor Office, (Confidential) *Report to the Government of Iraq on the Development of a Social Security System* (Geneva, 1954), pp. 12-13. The other rates were obtained from the Directorate of Labor and Social Security, Baghdād. The International Labor Office report is in the files of this Directorate.

> if not below it."[287] Obviously, a large segment of the unskilled laboring class suffered a tangible loss in its real income. One of the main factors contributing to this loss was doubtlessly the overflowing peasant-fed supply of labor.[288]

In the foregoing pages it was pointed out that the mass migration to the towns was, in a primary sense, the natural outcome of the workings of

agrarian and shaikhly institutions. It is necessary now to describe how these institutions affected the life of the peasants.

Of all classes, the peasants are perhaps the least uniform. The term "peasant" evokes different associations and corresponds to different sets of facts in different countries. In Iraq it signifies effectively quite another thing than, say, in Egypt or Lebanon, although all three countries are Arab. Indeed, even in Iraq it refers to a variety of social phenomena. Under the monarchy, at least seven types of peasants could be distinguished: the share-cropping tribal tenant–the most common; the freeholding tribal cultivator–a rarity; the small independent farmowner–largely found in the mid-Euphrates; the nontribal, serf-like, *tenant-miskīn* of the plains and valleys of Kurdistan; the *naggāsh* of the district of Sūq-ish-Shuyūkh; the *ta'āb*, a feature, among others, of the regions of Baṣrah and Shaṭṭ-il-'Arab; and, lastly, the hired agricultural laborer. The *miskīns* or "miserables," who originally constituted the bulk of the Kurdish peasantry, have already been identified. The *naggāsh* was a husbandman who, by his labor and on his own initiative, had revived a piece of land previously inundated with water and overgrown with bulrushes and, by this means and by virtue of undisturbed possession, had acquired or merely asserted a right in it, which was of a prescriptive nature and heritable and transferable.[289] The *ta'āb*, called also a *mughārisjī* in the mid-Euphrates,[290] was in essence a peasant who had obligated himself to plant a plot of land with date palms in accordance with a long-term contract which, on fulfillment, assured him a proprietary right in a portion of the land or the palm-trees, in addition to a stipulated annual share in the crop of dates for the duration of the contract. In 1919, in the province of Baṣrah, the *ta' ābs* numbered 4,093, the other types of cultivators 6,823.[291] In the forties, the *ta' ābs* still formed an important segment of the agricultural people of that region.[292] However, not all were, even at the earlier date, resident-*ta'ābs*: some had grown wealthy and lived in the city, leaving an agricultural laborer to look after the land. The agricultural laborers themselves were of various kinds. Some had a purely seasonal character. For example, every year from September to November a great number of Arabs moved to Shaṭṭ-il-'Arab from the marshes or from Muntafiq to help with the harvesting of dates. Other laborers worked permanently on the same estate, usually for a share in the produce. Still others, among whom the farmhands called in southern Iraq

the Ḥasāwīs after Hasā, a part of Saudi Arabia, in which they had their origin,[293] hired themselves out temporarily, as a rule on a yearly basis and for a payment in cash or kind or both. All these laborers were, like the *ta‘ābs* and *naggāshes,* in various stages of tribal decomposition or in an atomized state.

On the whole, the peasants did not live in a scattered manner, but in groups, and at a distance from the fields in which they labored. However, villages had a greater concentration of households in the irrigation zone than in the rain-fed regions. Or, to be more precise, the villages of the riverine Arabs were relatively large, those of the Kurdish plainsmen smaller, and those of the montane Kurds smallest. In 1957 there were in the Kurdish province of Sulaimāniyyah 1,407 villages with 225,260 inhabitants, and in the Arab province of Kūt 625 villages with 225,951 inhabitants. Again, in the Kurdish province of Arbīl 200,326 people lived in 1221 villages, whereas in the Arab province of Baṣrah 267,125 people lived in 267 villages.[294]

If the most unfortunate peasants were the nontribal *miskīns* and the casual Ḥasāwīs, the majority of the tillers of the soil, the riverine share-cropping tribal tenants, were also extremely poor. They formed the backbone of the country, but they labored without living. Their torn *dishdāshah*[295] was the only finery they had. They slept in overcrowded mud or mat huts together with their cows or buffaloes, surrounded by refuse. Their luxuries were a little tea and sugar, which they were able to purchase for the first time after World War I, in years when grain prices were high, and which they subsequently found it difficult to give up.[296] Their staple diet was made up of dates and lentils supplemented by barley or rice. The better varieties of these foods were, of course, beyond their means. They partook of the commonest Zahdī dates and the kind of rice known as Na‘īmah, which is a large and coarse white grain with white paddy, or Ḥawazāwī, which is a red grain with white paddy, and formed into a sort of bread exceedingly unpalatable. The standard of living of the tribal tenants in the Kurdish hills was as depressed, their food as low in nutritive content, and their huts as humble.

The constant companion of the peasants was and still is ankylostomiasis, which, according to physicians, gives rise to severe anemia and diminishes capacity for work. They had and have also frequent visitations from a long

list of other diseases. Usually these diseases were left unattended. Government dispensaries were and continue to be rare and distant. But even in the relatively few cases in which the peasants received attention, their treatment became futile, inasmuch as they returned to the same environment and the same conditions of life that had made them victims of the disease. An Iraqi physician vividly described this problem. “A patient,” he said,

> is admitted to the hospital. At a glance you realize he is suffering from ankylostomiasis and stool examination confirms that. You are struck with the extreme degree of his anemia and the obvious state of starvation. His Hb% [hemoglobin, i.e., iron content in blood] is found to be 20% and the R.B.C. [red blood cells] 2 millions per c.c. [cubic centimeters]. On diet and oral iron alone his condition improves and in one month his Hb goes up to 50% and R.B.C. to 3 millions per c.c. He is given anti-ankylostoma treatment, his previous condition not permitting this, and in another couple of weeks his Hb goes up to 65% and R.B.C. to 3.5 million per c.c. He feels much better and a marked improvement is noted in his mental powers. He wants to go home, back to his work and you have to let him go back to the same environment. A year later he is readmitted in the same condition.[297]

The sadness that was the life of the peasants was also in their songs. The following couplet was very current in the southern Tigris region:

> Mother, why have you brought me forth for injustice
> Except for me, the rain comes without clouds.[298]

Consciousness of the injustice of society goes together in the song with an acquiescence in it as part of a natural order. But in the last two decades of the monarchy the peasant began increasingly to question the necessity of his way of life, as is reflected in the more recent song of the Albū Muḥammad tribesmen translated below:

> O Lord, my condition is without meaning,
> I toil and others gather the fruits.

I wish to escape to Baghdād from this tribe,
Which succors not its afflicted nor has pride.
I wish to escape to Baghdād from this cultivation,
Which appeases no hunger nor gives repose.
Clap–palm and palm–time passes, passes
And I run and I am tired but what I earned is gone.[299]

At the root of the misery in which the peasant moved, was the small reward he received as his share from the produce of the land. What he got differed from province to province. Factors such as whether the land was rich or poor, or whether it was rain-fed or irrigated by flow or *sharrāds*[300] or pumps, or whether the work was on a permanent or casual basis, entered into the determination of his share. In general, under the monarchy he received not less than a quarter and not more than a half of the proceeds of his labor, but he might have taken as low as an eighth, as did in the English period the *murabbaʻjī* of the Mosul region, who was so called because once upon a time he was allowed one-fourth.[301] But conditions were greatly varied. In the forties on the Tigris in the Arab province of ʻAmārah, the rice peasant got half of the produce of his holding if he himself provided the seed, but only one-third if the seed was supplied by the shaikh. On good lands, known as *attiṭyāb*, which required less effort, his proportion was merely one-fourth.[302] In the same decade in the Shāmiyyah region of the mid-Euphrates, the rice peasant got 40 percent on the better and 50 percent on the poorer kind of land,[303] but he had to provide the seed and, if he had none, he took it from the shaikh on loan. In the fifties in the rain-fed Kurdish valley of Sulaimāniyyah, where cultivation was more precarious and uncertain, tenant wheat or barley growers received half of the yield, and migrant agricultural laborers one-sixth of the wheat crop for harvesting and one-fifth of barley for ploughing or payments in cash with or without food.[304]

The peasant did not receive his portion from the total farm produce, but from what was left of the crops after a series of dues, differing in amount from region to region, had been collected by the shaikh or agha. The principal dues as claimed in *manns*[305] in Shāmiyyah district in the twenties and in *kailas*[306] in ʻAmārah province in the forties were as follows:

1. *ash-Shiḥniyyah* or *al-Gha'ādah*, a contribution of four in one hundred *kailas*, or of one *mann* from each *ṭghār*[307] of the total yield to the men who guarded the crop from the moment it came to ripeness till its actual division;

2. *al-Qahwajiyyah* or the due of the shaikh's coffee-man: three in one hundred *kailas* or one *mann* from each *ṭghār;*

3. *al-Barṭīl*, a levy of two *manns* from each *ṭghār* raised in Shāmiyyah for the support of the shaikh's guest-house;

4. *al-lsmullah* (literally, "the name of God"), a payment in 'Amārah of three *kailas* to the *mūman*, a man of religion;

5. *al-Wazzānah* or the due of the *wazzān*, the measurer of the crop: five *kailas* in 'Amārah;

6. *al-Ma'mūriyyah*, a charge of one *mann* from each *ṭghār* of the whole produce in Shāmiyyah, or of five *kailas* from the share of every peasant in 'Amārah levied on behalf of the *ma'mūr*, the man who supervised the distribution of water and the repair of bunds.[308]

At one time, at least in some regions, the peasant had to bear also the brunt of the *sarkalah*, the perquisite of the *sirkāl*,[309] who was usually the head of the tribal section and had the chief charge of cultivation. But it would appear that, after the thirties, the *sirkāl* was more frequently paid out of the shaikh's share. However, in certain districts a special area, called a *muṭlaq*, was set aside for the *sirkāl*, who took its whole produce. Moreover, in the province of 'Amārah it was common for the *sirkāl* to sublease the land from the shaikh against a fixed payment, usually in kind and known as the *ḍamān*, which the shaikh expected to receive irrespective of how bad the harvest turned out to be.[310]

At any rate, so many in the entourage of the shaikh had slices in the fruits of the peasant's labor that the poet Muḥammad Ṣāleḥ Baḥr-il-'Ulūm was moved to say

> And at the door of the peasant's hut
> the dog of the shaikh is barking: "Where is my right?"[311]

The peasant had also to put up with other shaikhly impositions. If he owned livestock, he had to pay the *shāt marta'* or *aṭ-ṭarārah*, a grazing charge. If there was marriage or birth in his family, he incurred in some

areas an arbitrarily fixed fee. Dues no less hateful were also piled by aghas on Kurdish peasants, such as *merhane*, one in fifty head of sheep; *puwshane*, the equivalent of the Arab *aṭ-ṭarārah; micēwer*, a payment for the support of the agha's house steward; *piytak*, a contribution in money towards the expenses of a wedding in the agha's family, etc.[312]

As could be imagined, by the time the crop had been divided and the various dues had been paid, not much was left for the peasant and his family. In 1924 Iraq's director general of public accounts put the average yearly income of about 6,000 peasants working for 115 smaller shaikhs in Shāmiyyah at around 1270 kilograms of rice, or 140 rupees (10½ pounds sterling).[313] For its part, the government of the "Mandate" estimated the average cash value of a peasant's yearly portion of a cereal crop at about 200 rupees or £15 in 1928, and 80 rupees or £6 in 1930.[314] in the province of ʻAmārah in 1943, the total receipts of 80 men composing the *ḥūshiyyah* of Shaikh Khaṭṭāb Jāsim of Albū Muḥammad was 177 tons of rice, and of 552 men composing the *ḥūshiyyah* of Shaikh Muḥammad al-ʻAraibī of the same tribe, 1,255 tons.[315] This comes to about 2.2 or 2.3 tons for each man, the cash equivalent of which cannot now be determined. The rank-and-file tenant-tribesman had, of necessity, a smaller share. On the other hand, according to a survey conducted by a Dutch agricultural economist in the Ḥillah and Dīwāniyyah regions–where the level of living of the peasants was higher than in ʻAmārah–the average yearly net income in the late fifties of 197 tribal tenants on large holdings was 78.7 dīnārs, and of 179 tribal tenants on medium holdings 62.8 dīnārs or pounds sterling.[316] The figures were computed on the basis of the selling price for the producer, at the moment of the survey, of all the tenant's products, including the home-consumed products. The survey was carried out from October 1958 to May 1959, that is, *after* the July Revolution. However, the Agrarian Reform Law, passed in September, had not yet been put into effect. Moreover, an interim regulation by the new regime, fixing the tenant's maximum payment to the landowner at 50 percent of the crop, does not appear to have been fully implemented. It is not clear to what extent the unsettled conditions of the time–the period was that of the Communist "Flood-tide"–affected the local movement of prices.

For his subsistence income, the peasant did not only have to work on his assigned holding, but had also to perform with his own implements and

draft animal the duty known as *al-‘Aunah–or herewez* in Kurdistan–which involved corvée labor on the land reserved for the shaikh, agha, or *sayyid*. Moreover, he was often called upon to build or repair bunds, to clear or deepen canals, or to dig new feeder channels, for which he received no remuneration.[317] Over and above this, if his crops were ruined through seasonal disasters, he could not always count on material assistance from the shaikh.

The lot of the peasant woman was much harder than that of the male peasant, for she not only shared his misery and his worries, but had to bear also his own arbitrariness. In certain areas she was in effect no better than a chattel: tribal disputes were not infrequently settled at her expense, herself being paid in *faṣl*, that is, in settlement of a dispute which involved or would have involved the shedding of blood. In 1929, in ‘Amārah, according to the administrative inspector of this province, “awards of women in *faṣl* were made in 62 tribal cases, 125 women altogether being involved. In some cases the women are to be paid in instalments so many down and the remainder at intervals. In one case the last woman will not be paid until 9 years hence. . . .”[318] Those earmarked for later delivery to the aggrieved party were young girls that had not yet attained majority. They and the other women given in *faṣl* or, to use the name by which they were known, the *faṣliy-yāt*, led a particularly harsh life, their husbands normally oppressing them and holding them in contempt. Disposal by *faṣl* was not the only system to which the peasant woman was exposed. Sometimes, with a view to winning favor, her father offered her as a gift to one or other of the notables of the village. This went under the designation of *zawāj-ul-hibah* or “gift marriage.” Moreover, often, when still a child, she was pledged to a personage or relative in *waqf* (literally, mortmain) marriage–*zawāj-ul-waqf*.[319] These were some of the more glaring instances of the social oppression of the peasant woman, a theme which cannot here be developed further without going too far out of the way.

In a session of the 1937 Bakr Ṣidqī parliament, the deputy from Baṣrah recounted an incident that he had with a peasant soldier. “Twenty days ago,” he said, “as I was returning in a small boat from the village of Ḥarīd to Baṣrah I met a soldier on the river shore. I took him along. ... On the way, as we conversed, ... I found him very discontented with his experience as a soldier. I attempted by various means to impress upon him the importance

of the duty of serving one's homeland .... His answer to me was: " *'Ammī shunū waṭan?"* Uncle, what homeland? I have no hut to live in and no one allows me to graze my buffalo even in the marshes!"[320]

In view of the conditions under which the peasants lived, the attitude of this soldier and the point that the deputy from Baṣrah wanted to make can be appreciated. The country gave the peasants nothing. It only neglected them. They were unaided with their cultivation. Their needs were uncared for. Their children were unschooled and, in the absence of health services, frequently succumbed to various kinds of diseases. From their standpoint, the notion that they owed the country anything was, therefore, an absurdity. They had, indeed, no sense of belonging to it. Clearly, the denial of their right to a normal life was not only estranging them from their shaikh and their tribe, but also undermining any possibility of their association in meaningful terms with the larger community amidst which they lived, particularly when they felt that the organized power of that community helped to perpetuate the conditions from which they suffered. Thus deep and far-reaching was the harm for the society inherent in the land system and in the continuance of the shaikh.

Shaikhly institutions were not only wearing away the peasants, but in their impact on the land they were as wasteful. The shaikhs and aghas, nomadic warriors by origin, were not within their element in agriculture. It cannot be denied that this was true also of most of the peasants, whose links with the land were as weak and who, therefore, had never been skillful cultivators. But the perpetuation of shaikh and agha not only doomed the peasants to destitution, but barred them from a more successful adaptation to the land. Natural conditions-the recurrent floods in the irrigation zone, uncontrolled by the central authorities till 1956, and the precariousness of agriculture in the rain-fed areas-would have taxed sound agricultural institutions, but the shaikhly system was intrinsically unsuited for such an environment. Of course, this was true generally: some tribal chiefs had become efficient landlords, but they were the exception. Again, it must be admitted, as the first decade after the Revolution of 1958 was to show, that there were not enough competent agricultural officers to take the place of the shaikhs and aghas; but a new social departure was needed and unavoidable.

It is true that, under the monarchy, thanks largely to the initiative of the government and the improvement of irrigation, more and more virgin land was brought under the plough. At the same time, however, on account of wasteful methods of cultivation, the soil steadily deteriorated in the flow-irrigated plains. A mission, organized by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, estimated in 1952 that in the preceding few decades in the country as a whole 20 to 30 percent of the cultivated land had been abandoned because of salination caused by the extravagant use of water and bad drainage and that, for the same reason, yields on other land fell by 20 to 50 percent.[321] According to an Iraqi economist, the average yields of grain (wheat and barley) in kilograms per dūnum dropped from 225 in 1919-1923 to 187 in 1934-1938, and further to 143 in 1953-1958.[322]

The process of agricultural deterioration was most pronounced in ʻAmārah. Conditions in this province in the forties and fifties contrasted vividly with what had been taking place in earlier decades. At around the turn of the century much of its land, which had been "sleeping, . . . opened her eyes," to use a picturesque expression of the Arab peasant. By 1918 the shaikhs were "rolling in wealth."[323] Even as late as 1930 an administrative account described ʻAmārah as "one of the fairest and richest provinces of Iraq."[324] But its governor's report for 1944 conveyed the impression of widespread decline. "Canals," he wrote, "are silted up and uncleared, feeder channels unregulated, salt-overlaid soil unwashed, . . . and embankments unrepaired. . . ." He also brought out that, although the 181 landlords of ʻAmārah held 3,647,793 dūnums of land and 3,137,436 of these dūnums were cultivable, only 625,894 were actually cultivated, while most of the rest had been "abandoned for many years"[325] By the fifties still more land had gone out of cultivation, and many villages were partly or completely deserted.[326]

This state of affairs and the low and declining productivity of the land in the country generally, no less than the primitiveness and wastefulness of agricultural methods, flowed, in an essential and ultimate sense, from the unwholesome social conditions of the peasants. Obviously, cultivators living in semiserfdom and in ignorance and utter poverty could hardly be expected to be good agriculturists, or to develop any real concern for the land. We have here in some respects but another confirmation of

Montesquieu's well-known remark: "The soil is productive less by reason of its natural fertility than because the people tilling it are free."

Extreme concentration of landholdings was also bound to harm agriculture. "The shaikhs," affirmed the governor of 'Amārah in 1944, "are solely interested in immediate returns without regard for the future of the land .... The extent of neglect is no matter to them because they hold areas so vast that they are assured of big yields in any case."[327]

Another hindrance to the advance of agriculture lay in the psychology and social norms of the shaikhly stratum. As has earlier been noted, by virtue of the development of better communications, production on shaikhly estates became increasingly commercial in character, in the sense that these estates now produced for a market and not basically for the needs of the tribe, as in days gone by. But the shaikhs never developed the commercial ethos in its fullness. It is true that they did not altogether escape from the influence of the appetite for unlimited gain. For example, the shaikhs of 'Amārah, who may or may not have been in this respect representative of the shaikhs of other provinces, were described by one political officer as "usually. . . unprogressive, extremely selfish, and possessed of an inordinate greed for money."[328] At the same time, with rare exceptions, the shaikhs never learned the art of saving. Many of them were so concerned with preserving shaikhly dignity that little was left from their large receipts for reinvestment in agriculture. A high British revenue official, accounting for the low income of the state from its lands, remarked in 1924 that "if policy demanded the continuance of the old shaikhs, allowance must be made for their thriftless ways . . . though new lessees, drawn from a more business-like class and having no traditional dignity to maintain, might quite well have paid (higher) rents."[329] In this connection, the following estimate by an Iraqi director general of public accounts of how 115 shaikhs from the Shāmiyyah and Abū Sukhair districts spent their income in 1925[330] is not without interest:

	In thousands of rupees	*Percentage*
Estimated total net income	2,122	100
Estimated expenditures		
On guests	212	10
On wives and children	424	20
On visits to holy places	318	15
Khums;[331] *zakāt*,[332] and charities given to *sādah* and *'ulamā'*	531	25
Interests on loans from traders	637	30

It is difficult to give an opinion on the accuracy of the estimate, or on its general illustrative value. But it is clear that these relatively minor shaikhs of the mid-Euphrates could not with their incomes live in the way their status required, and had to borrow from traders at excessive rates of interest. In Iraq the average charge on loans in rural areas was 30 percent, although some money-lenders were known to have exacted as high as 60 percent by various devious ways.[333] Being close to the Shī'īholy cities, the mid-Euphrates shaikhs were apt to spend much on *'ulamā'* and *sādah* and other affairs of religion. Their standing in the society would have otherwise suffered. The bigger shaikhs of the lower Tigris did not have to worry as much about the clerical order or the obligations of the faith, but in other respects were no less unthrifty. They thus spent–to quote from an administrative report–"a ridiculously large proportion of their incomes on salaries to their wives, children, and even to much further relatives."[334] Their *ḥūshiyyah* or personal guard also weighed heavily on their finances: even a middle-size shaikh of the Albū Muḥammad, whose income in 1943 was 736 tons of rice, had to spend on his *ḥūshiyyah* 177 tons, or 24 percent of the whole.[335] This gives more than an inkling of the extent to which the shaikhs had come to rely on coercion to keep their tribesmen under control. But considerations of prestige were also involved.

One other factor encumbering the progress of agriculture was the disfavor with which shaikhs and aghas looked on innovations. Except for a small minority, and save for their use of pressure pumps, they showed reluctance to abandon time-worn methods and techniques. They also concentrated on the production of grain, and refused to experiment with new crops or facilitate agricultural extension and research.[336]

The deficiencies of the shaikhly system so far discussed were common to many a province of Iraq, and do not by themselves explain why the

deterioration of agriculture should have been more pronounced in ‘Amārah. Part of the explanation, it would seem, lies with the rapid pump development on the Tigris. The shaikhs and town *mallāks* of Kūt and Baghdād were allowed to erect a great number of pumps without regard to the consequences on cultivation further down the river. In 1957, out of the country’s 5,264 pumps, 2,079 or 39 percent were along the Tigris in the provinces of Kūt and Baghdād,[337] that is, in the two provinces just above ‘Amārah. In 1930, when the number of pumps installed there was only 1,248, ‘Amārah’s administrative inspector deemed it necessary to point out that

> before the pump boom the Tigris was to all intents and purposes a summer canal for ‘Amārah and its prosperity is founded largely on this fact. The pump boom threatens to alter all this. Large supplies are being drawn off above ‘Amārah and the multiplication of pumps goes on without restriction. What is going to happen to ‘Amārah?. . . It is unthinkable that the government should allow a situation to develop whereby one of its richest provinces may be ruined and that expensive pump irrigation should be encouraged at the expense of natural free flow canals.[338]

But it appears that the town *mallāks* and shaikhs of Baghdād and Kūt wielded more influence in the capital than the ‘Amārah shaikhs.

> What is the policy of the Iraq government towards its rice-growing industry? [wondered the Administrative Inspector at another point in his report]. Possibly even after the lapse of 10 years it is still too busy with politics to have any rice policy, but at any rate a year ago when the question of safeguarding the ‘Amārah summer water supplies was raised, the Ministry of Irrigation and Agriculture disclosed its views on the subject of rice. Briefly that ministry is quite definitely hostile to rice cultivation and the ‘Amārah rice kings look like going to the wall and it is suggested that they should only have water that cannot possibly be used for other less extravagant summer crops. The pump pashas of Baghdād and Kūt have won![339]

And also some pump-producing company, one might add. The effect of this development was reinforced by the construction of the Kūt barrage in 1939, which diverted still more supplies, now to the big shaikhs on the Gharrāf. In consequence, some of ‘Amārah’s channels dried up and recourse had to be had to costly pump irrigation. Thus the number of pumps in this province increased from 105 in 1929[340] to 462 in 1957,[341] which in turn led to a more extortionate treatment of *sirkāl* and peasant in the matter of rent and the sharing of crops.

The real cause of the decline in ‘Amārah, however, was not so much the decrease of the water supply as the chaotic use of the water that was available. Shaikhs resorted frequently to illicit damming: those on the head reaches of the river erected dams across the canals and cut off the water from those below them. This often led to the death of channels. Another detrimental practice was that of soaking the land with water and running off the water, after the irrigation of the fields, into local drainage canals which were left to find their own levels. Many of these drainage canals were as large as the main distributaries. The extent of the wastage of water can, therefore, be imagined. By such methods large cultivable areas were ruined. Some shaikhs also suffered from too much water, and others had too little, and they could not cooperate. The governor of ‘Amārah brought out in 1944 that the Ḥillah branch of the Euphrates, which serves 35 percent of the lands of Diwāniyyah province and all the lands of Ḥillah province, excepting the Musayyib district, had only a maximum recorded flow of 200 cubic meters per second, whereas the Kaḥla’ channel of the Tigris in ‘Amārah had in 1942 a flow of 400 cubic meters per second, and was the share of only two shaikhs who were constantly in dispute over the distribution of the water, and always complained of its insufficiency. Similarly, the Butairah canal in ‘Amārah, which had a 1942 flow of 722 cubic meters per second was dominated by two bickering shaikhs of the Azairij tribe.[342] This dispute on the Butairah had apparently become a part of a tradition, for the fathers of these shaikhs had the same problem. “Shaikh Salmān Al-Manshad,” wrote the province’s administrative inspector in 1929, “suffers from too much water. He has to maintain the great Umm Zorah bund to prevent some of his rice lands being drowned and he appears unable to do this without the assistance of his neighbour

Shawwāi who is unwilling to help him."[343] Similar conditions existed in other regions in which the shaikhs held sway.

Endemic, then, in the shaikhly system was the state of thriftlessness, the limited ability to reinvest in agriculture, the concern for immediate returns, the resistance to innovations, the wasteful methods of cultivation, and the general impoverishment of the land. Thus, not only in human but also in material resources was heavy the cost that the millions of Iraqis had to bear so that a few hundreds of shaikhs could continue to thrive. But has the condition of the peasant and of the land in the post-shaikh period been any better? In regard to this something will be said on other pages.

7

THE *SĀDAH*

The *sādah* (plural of *sayyid),* also known as *ashrāf* (plural of *sharīf),* claimed to be, as already mentioned, of the Prophet's blood. They were, in a theoretical sense, a caste, that is, a closed group. To belong to them was presumably a matter of birth and heredity. They drew their sanction from the religion of the people, availing themselves of Qur'anic or traditional sayings in favor of the Prophet's family to dignify their interests and privileges by the impress of divine calculation. However, the claim of descent from the House of Muḥammad put forth by the landed *sādah* was merely a supporting element, rather than the real underpinning of their social position. If they mattered in the society, they mattered essentially on some other ground–either on account of their wealth, or their holding of office, or their knowledge of religion or of the holy law, or their leadership of tribes or of mystic orders, or a combination of two or more of these factors. Indeed, the trend appears to have been for the claim of sacred descent to be put forward after the claimants had risen in the world, the change in their standing or their new pull in society enabling them to get away with the claim, which in time came to be generally accepted, though not by all the faithful.[1] As a matter of fact, the authenticity of the pedigree of the greater number of the *sādah* had not gone unquestioned. Even the Gailānīs, who provided the *naqībs* or marshals of the *ashrāf* at Baghdād for upwards of four centuries–from 1531 to 1962, when the office lapsed[2]–did not escape the charge of making up their genealogical tree.[3] Besides, in bygone times the *ashrāf* would appear to have conferred the title of *sayyid* on people who were absolute strangers, with a view to fortifying themselves politically.[4]

Among the Sunnīs, at least in the cities, the *ashrāf* were somewhat limited in number and, for the most part, men of social prominence and

abundant means. According to an official list, published in 1894 in order, apparently, to put an end to wranglings over precedence,[5] there were in Baghdād in that year only five *Sunnī ashrāf* families–the Jamīls, Gailānīs, Alūsīs, Ḥaidarīs, and Sinawīs–and, in all, twenty-one Sunnī *ashrāf*, sixteen of whom were from the family of Gailānī (see Table 7-1). For some reason, the Sinawīs, who claimed descent from the Umayyads and, therefore, from Quraysh, the Prophet's tribe, rather than from the Prophet's House, were included in the list; whereas the Suwaidīs, who claimed descent from ʻAbbās, the uncle of the Prophet,[6] were passed over.[7] The Tabaqchalīs and the family of Rajab ar-Rāwī, who claimed descent from Ḥusain, grandson of the Prophet,[8] were also left out, perhaps because they belonged to Rifāʻism, a mystic order that rivaled that of the *naqīb*, who headed the Qādirī path. Some *ashrāf*, like the religious reformer Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Alūsī, were omitted apparently because they were not in the good graces of the sultan.[9]

Although, of the just mentioned Sunnī *ashrāf* families of Baghdād, only the Jamīls figure among the principal landed families of 1958 shown in Table 5-3, it must be kept in mind that this table takes into account only agricultural land held in *ṭāpū*, or in *lazmah*, or as *mulk*, but not urban property or *waqf* estates, that is, estates in mortmain. Many of the Sunnī *ashrāf* administered not only charitable *waqfs*, that is, properties or funds entailed to pious or charitable purposes, but also *waqfs* of the *dhurriyyah* kind, that is, inalienable estates, the proceeds of which accrued to themselves as descendants of the *waqfs'* founders. These estates remained unaffected by the 1958 Agrarian Reform Law. In Ottoman times, as under the monarchy, much of the wealth and influence of a family like the Gailānīs (the *naqīb's* branch) stemmed from its control of *dhurriyyah* and charitable *waqfs* rather than from its holdings in *ṭāpū* or *lazmah*, which in 1958 came to only 13,668 dūnums (see Table 10-3). On the other hand, even in 1894 some Sunnī *ashrāf*, though of high status, were propertyless, if not impecunious.

TABLE 7-1

Official List of the Sunnī Ashrāf Families of Baghdād in 1894

Bait (family)	Place of origin of family	Name of sayyid	Class or occupation
Āl Jamīl	Ḥamah, Syria	Muḥammad	Mallāk
al-Gailānī	Gīlan, Persia	ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān (*Naqīb* till 1927)	ʻĀlim[1]—mallāk; chief of Qadīrī mystic order; premier of Iraq 1921-1922
al-Gailānī		ʻAbd-ul-Qāder[2]	ʻĀlim—mallāk
al-Gailānī		Zain-ul-ʻĀbidīn	Mallāk
al-Ālūsī	Ālūs, Iraq[3]	Nuʻmān	ʻĀlim (of limited means)
al-Gailānī		Dāūd Ḍiyā'-ud-dīn	Mallāk
al-Gailānī		Muḥammad Darwīsh	Mallāk
al-Ḥaidarī	Ardabīl, Persia	ʻAbdullah Salīm	ʻĀlim—mallāk
as-Sinawī	Sinā, Persia	ʻAbd-ul-Majīd	ʻĀlim and qādi[4]
al-Gailāni		Aḥmad	Mallāk
al-Gailānī		ʻAbdullah	Mallāk
al-Gailānī		Maḥmūd (*Naqīb* 1927-1936)	ʻĀlim—mallāk
Āl Jamīl		Muṣṭafa	ʻĀlim
al-Gailānī		Muḥyī-d-Dīn	ʻĀlim
al-Gailānī		Ṣafa'-ud-Dīn	Mallāk
al-Gailānī		Muḥammad Ḥamīd	Mallāk
al-Gailānī		Ḥusain	Mallāk
al-Gailānī		ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq	Mallāk
al-Gailānī		ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb	Mallāk
al-Gailānī		Muḥammad al-Yāsīn	Mallāk
al-Gailānī		Maḥmud ʻAbd-ul-Qāder	ʻĀlim—mallāk

[1]A man learned in religion.

[2]ʻAbd-ul-Qāder was the uncle of Rashīd ʻAlī al-Gailānī, a premier in 1930 and 1940-41.

[3]Ālus is a village in the province of Dulaim.

[4]A judge deciding on questions connected with religion.

Source: For the names of the *ashrāf, Sāl Nāmeh* (Yearbook) of the Baghdād Wilayah for 1894. For the other particulars, Yūsuf al-Gailārī, administrator of the Qādirī Awqāf of Baghdād, conversation, 24 February 1971.

Among the Shīʻīs, particularly in the tribal country, the stratum of *sādah* was more widespread and comprised, along with the very wealthy, men from humble occupations. It was also more unambiguously parasitic: the *khums* or fifth part of the income, a due incumbent upon all faithful Shīʻīs, was the perquisite of the *sādah*[10]. Moreover, in some areas the lands belonging to them were *muḥarramāt*, that is, forbidden to others and preserved for them and their descendants.[11]

Many of the prominent *ashrāf* families were of relatively recent Arabian or Persian or Syrian origin. The Abū Ṭabīkhs, who in 1958 owned 124,496 dūnums on the Shāmiyyah channel of the Euphrates, and at Rumaithah and Chamchah in Dīwāniyyah province, had moved up to Iraq from al-Ḥasa,

Arabia, some 250 years earlier.[12] The Jamīls, who held 92,166 dūnums, including most of the tail of the Khurāsān River in Diyālah, and, over and above this, possessed 121 houses and shops in the Qanbar ʻAlī quarter of Baghdād, had come to Iraq from Syria toward the end of the eighteenth century.[13] Ash-Shurafā', owners of 33,352 dūnums on the Shaṭṭ-il-Ḥillah,[14] migrated from Mecca some 350 years before.[15] Similarly with other less prosperous *sādah:* the Tabaqchalīs, who provided several of the *muftīs*[16] of Baghdād and Ḥillah, were from Ḥamah, Syria;[17] the Qazwīnīs, owners of estates in Hindiyyah and on the Maḥāwīl canal, hailed from Persia;[18] the Zuwains, who had date gardens round Jaʻārah, were from Mecca;[19] and the Yāsirs, who possessed property on the Dīwāniyyah Shaṭṭ, from Madīnah,[20] and all migrants of the last few centuries. Of course, the royal family itself was of Ḥijāzī origin, and came to Iraq only in 1921. The *sādah* of Mosul–the Naqībs, Fakhrīs, Muftīs, and ʻUbaidīs–descended from Sayyid ʻAbdullah of the well-known Aʻrajī House, whom the Turks brought over from Madīnah in the middle of the sixteenth century in the hope, presumably, of using his holy qualities to pacify the recalcitrant inhabitants of the city.[21]

Only a small number of *ashrāf* families, notably the Gailānīs of Baghdād, the Naqībs and Bāshaʻyāns of Baṣrah, and the Saʻdūns of Muntafiq, were older than Ottoman rule. Shaikh ʻAbd-ul-Qādir, the real builder of the Gailānīs' fortunes, came to Baghdād from the Persian district of Gīlān in 1095. The Naqībs of Baṣrah, who controlled extensive *waqf*[22] property, traced their descent to Sayyid Aḥmad ar-Rifāʻī, founder of the Rifāʻī mystic order, who died in 1183 and whose tomb stands east of the town of Hayy.[23] The Bāshaʻyāns, who in 1920 owned Baṣrah's Mushriq quarter and its mosque, claimed direct descent from the ʻAbbāsid caliphs.[24] But, as one account current in Baṣrah has it, their ancestor was actually an immigrant Afghani dervish.[25] Anyhow, one of their forefathers, Shaikh ʻAbd-us-Salām al-ʻAbbāsī, appears to have helped in the founding of the present Baṣrah in the fifteenth century.[26] The Saʻdūns, owners in 1958 of more than 219,765 dūnums[27] and ex-rulers of the Muntafiq tribal confederation, which from the sixteenth century till 1871 was virtually independent of Turkish authority, had their origin in Mecca, and migrated to Iraq before the beginning of the Ottoman period.[28] It is not clear when the Haidarīs, an old family of Kurdish *sādah*, moved to Baghdād from Ardabīl, southwest of the

Caspian,[29] but the foundation of their wealth was laid in the time of Sultan Sulaimān the Magnificent, in the first half of the sixteenth century.[30]

What status did the *sādah* enjoy under the monarchy? To begin with, the general regard accorded to them varied, depending upon the period. If in 1921 the stratum still commanded religious reverence, by 1958 it had lost much, if not all, of its old glamor. Beyond this, the scale of prestige differed not only from city to city, or as between the cities and countryside, but also from class to class, sect to sect, and from one ethnic group to another. This was but a reflection of the multiple and diverse nature of Iraqi society.

Of course, the *sādah* were not all of equal standing. Bearing in mind the essentially subjective character of social estimation, and making allowance for individual exceptions, it could be said that in general a *sayyid* who was at the same time a *‘ālim* enjoyed a higher esteem than a mere *sayyid*. Similarly–and this has particular application to the Kurdish provinces–a *sayyid-‘ālim* who was at the same time a master of a mystic order, like Aḥmad-i Khānaqah, murshid[31] of the Naqshbandīs at Kirkūk,[32] ranked higher than a mere *sayyid-‘ālim*. In the tribal country, the *sādah* who had tribes of their own, like the Jāf Begzādah, the Abū Ṭabīkhs, and the Mgutars,[33] possessed a superior status to the *sādah* who held land under tribal shaikhs.[34] On the whole, in the eyes of the upper class but not necessarily of the populace, a poor *sayyid* ranked lower than a rich *sayyid* or a *sayyid* that had been rich and had become impoverished. Obviously, a man like Sayyid ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān al-Gailānī, who in 1921 was marshal of the *ashrāf*, murshid of the Qādirī order, owner of extensive estates, and prime minister of Iraq,[35] commanded great deference in the higher reaches of the society. But the little people of Baghdād respected more and loved more the reformer and revivalist Sayyid Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Alūsī, who lived in reduced circumstances and who, on being offered by the British high commissioner, Sir Percy Cox, three hundred dīnārs through Anastās, the Carmelite, replied: “It is better for me to die of hunger than take money which I did not earn.”[36]

Excluding the royal family, the *sādah*– in particular by reason of the doubt surrounding the genuineness of their pedigree–did not necessarily constitute the uppermost social stratum. Moreover, the hierarchy of prestige was neither stable nor clearly defined. It is difficult, for example, to say

where the *sādah* stood in relation to the *shuyūkh aṣl* (literally the "shaikhs of noble lineage"), who in the twenties formed the backbone of Baṣrah's old tribally based aristocracy. The *shuyūkh aṣl* were the heads of families descending from an "old and noble tribe," and in particular from the very old confederation of the ʻAnizah to which King ʻAbd-ul-ʻAziz ibn Saʻūd allegedly belonged. In their scale of values, the most important thing was said to be honor: if injury was done to a *shaikh aṣl's* honor, then "death became sweet." As landowners, they deemed it dignified to sell grain, but to plant or deal in vegetables was for them a *waksah*– a dishonor. Though in the fifties they were still men of substance, they scarcely numbered among the very wealthy, who consisted mainly of *nouveaux riches*, such as the Jewish Ṭuwayyeqs, owners of "more than a hundred keys";[37] the Christian Mikhaīl Ḥanna ash-Shaikhs, proprietors of *dūbas*– boats plying Iraq's rivers, and the Ḥamads, merchants of Kuwait, who are alleged to have "smuggled" not so long ago "thirteen black-coated golden anchors" to India, and in 1958 owned buildings in many parts of Iraq and even, it is said, in New York and Washington. Of course, in status the *shuyūkh aṣl* towered above these social parvenus. In fact, in their own estimation, they were second to no class in dignity and prestige. Up to the forties or so they seldom intermarried with strangers. Doing this would have been a *waksah*, and the "deviationist"–the *khaḍīr*– placed himself beyond the pale. Until recent times, the *shuyūkh aṣl* also clung to the Arab custom of *nahwah*, the prior right of a cousin to the hand of a marriageable girl, anxious, as they were, of preserving property within the family. Insofar as their attitude towards the *sādah* was concerned, they appear to have differentiated between the *sādah* who were at the same time *shuyūkh aṣl*, as the Saʻdūns, or who had long and unassailable standing, as the Naqībs, and the rest of the *sādah*. Only the former did they treat as their equals. The *sādah* themselves, however, believed that no blood was as good as theirs.[38]

Mosul had even more of a closed aristocratic society than Baṣrah. Significantly, its "first family" in the twenties did not stem from the *sādah*. That place was occupied by the Jalīlīs[39] of the Arab tribe of Taghleb[40] or, more accurately, by the "Pashas' Branch" of the Jalīlīs, that is, the descendants of Ismaʻīl Pasha, from whose house were drawn the rulers of Mosul in the eighteenth century.[41] Their forebears, strangely enough, were Christians. So stainless, noted a well-informed observer in 1909, was the

lineage of the contemporary head of the aforementioned branch of the family, that his sisters had to remain unwed because Mosul could not provide a husband "equal to them in birth."[42] Actually, there were and would be subsequently intermarriages between these Jalīlīs and Mosul's *sādah*, but neither they nor the *sādah* entered into matrimonies with any other class.[43]

By contrast, the "aristocracy" of Baghdād in its various components–the *sādah*, the old families of landed upper officials, and the propertied descendants of the Mamlūks–being strongly permeated by Turkish or Persian influences, was in a way more cosmopolitan, more socially open, and less conscious of interclass barriers. Its *sādah* intermarried even with rich *chalabīs*.[44]

As has already been noted, there were *sādah* that had limited means. This shows that the accident of birth did not by itself guarantee easy access to wealth, although it placed the *sādah* at a distinct advantage with regard to other Moslems. In recent times, a mere reputation as a *sayyid* could be turned into great material gain only in the more primitive parts of Iraq. Around the turn of the century a *sayyid* from Qurnah settled down with the ma'dān[45] of the southern marshes and, in his capacity as a claimant of holy lineage, demanded a few sheep from every flock and a buffalo from every herd. By 1920, his son, on whose head the Ma'dān came to take their oaths, had become, we are told, the owner of about 1,000 buffaloes and 10,000 sheep.[46]

Numerous factors apart from birth or reputation for holiness accounted for the enrichment of *sādah* families. One such factor was their monopoly of an office or a function. For instance, the Ḥaidarīs of Baghdād were, under the Ottomans, for long hereditary farmers of tithes and of the capitation tax on Baṣrah's Sabeans, Jews, and Christians. They thereby piled up great fortunes and came to possess whole villages such as Shahrabān, Hibhib, and Sharwīn to the northeast of Baghdād, and some thirty villages in the districts of Ḥarīr and Shahrizūr. It was also from among the members of this family, who were renowned for their legal and religious learning, that the *muftīs* of the Ḥanafī and Shāfi'ī rites were chosen for several centuries.[47] The wealth which they had begun to build during the reign of Sultan Sulaimān (1520-1566) had markedly diminished

by the time of the founding of the monarchy. Their decline is said to have been induced partly by the "regular policy of impoverishing landowners" pursued by Sultan ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd (1876-1909), and partly by their own wasteful expenditure.[48]

Some of the wealthy *sādah* families had been administrators, for a long time, of holy shrines and sanctuaries. The Naqīb Zādas of Karbalā', an opulent landed family settled in the town since the days of the Ṣafawīs,[49] frequently assumed the killidārship[50] of the Ḥusain shrine.[51] The Suwaidīs were for long and still are the *mutawallīs*[52] of the shrine of Shaikh Maʻrūf in Baghdād.[53] As far as these two families are concerned, it is not possible to say whether it was wealth that led to the office or the office that led to wealth. In other cases, the sequence is more clearly discernible. Thus the Rufaiʻīs became the richest family of Najaf *during* their half-century long tenure of the *sidānah*[54] of the ʻAlid sanctuary in that city.[55] In some instances, the family administering a sanctuary was directly related to the *ʻālim* or saint buried in it. The *naqīb* of Baghdād, Sayyid ʻAbd-ur-Rahmān al-Gailānī, who in the twenties had charge of Baghdād's Qādiriyyah shrine, founded in the fourteenth century in honor of ʻAbd-ul-Qāder al-Gailānī, was, as already mentioned, a descendant of this great preacher and mystic. The very large endowments of the shrine were among the eleven *awqāf* in the Ottoman empire which were *mustathnah*, that is, free from the supervision of the Ministry of Finance; and, though the cost of accommodating pilgrims ran to a considerable sum yearly, it would appear that "the Naqīb, like all *mutawallīs* of *awqāf,* administered the revenues to the advantage of himself and his family."[56] The *naqīb* had also valuable private estates round the town of Baʻqūbah and on the Euphrates,[57] and before the First World War was considered to be the richest man in the country.[58]

Service to the Ottoman government was, in other instances, the *sādah's* avenue to land and wealth. Āl-Mgūṭar, who in 1958 owned 117,839 dūnums in the province of Dīwāniyyah,[59] are a case in point. They appear to have prospered primarily because they enjoyed the favor of the Turks and actively helped them, although one of the chief representatives of the family was also a "very shrewd business man."[60] The Turks introduced in the nineteenth century a large number of *sādah* into the tribal country and granted them extensive areas, apparently without charge or at a nominal fee.

The object was to make use of their reputation for sanctity to appease the countryside or check the power of the tribal shaikhs. The experiment, incidentally, was not altogether successful, for many of the *sādah* turned out to be as prone as the shaikhs to prey upon weaker neighbors, and as recalcitrant in meeting the Turkish revenue demand.[61]

Sometimes the *sādah* obtained from the Ottomans titles to tracts of lands over the heads of cultivating tribesmen, and in this way were instrumental in dispossessing them of their customary tribal rights. "One of the most difficult problems," wrote the political officer of one of the administrative divisions in 1918,

> is the case of the absentee landlord, the *mallāk* . . . , who by methods which, in at least 50 per cent of cases, were distinctly shady, has acquired a title to a large extent of fertile land .... In some instances the tribesman has taken advantage of the weakening of Turkish authority during the war[62] and has resumed possession of what he claims to be his by immemorial tribal custom. On the one hand stands the *mallāk*. . . , he protests that he has been robbed of his right by a set of wild tribesmen, who have not hesitated to commit the unforgivable sin of encroaching on the sacred rights of the holy *sayyid*. He stands upon his rights and demands his pound of flesh. On the other hand the tribesman is equally insistent if not equally vocal.... He admits the existence of the *mallāk's* title deeds, but he has strenuously denied their validity, and has never paid rent except when yielding to "force majeure": "when an armed burglar comes to your house, the simplest plan often is to part with some of your property to induce him to depart."[63]

Very irregular title deeds or *ṭāpū sanads* formed, more often than not, the basis of the proprietary rights acquired by the Sa'dūns family in vast tribal lands in the Muntafiq province. The following is an extract from a *ṭāpū* paper which in form was very common:[64]

Owner of land	:	Ibrahīm as-Sa'dūns
Boundaries	:	North–al-Khadūr
		South–Ḥassūnah

		West-Al-Khulaimī
		East–Al-Ḥuwaidah and Umm al Aftūr
Price paid	:	5,000 rupees
Dūnums	:	14,708

On inspection, the real area to which the title-deed referred was found to be 60,000 dūnums. One year's *mallākiyyah*[65] was about 26,000 rupees, that is, over five times the original price of the land. There is no indication that *ṭāpū* papers relating to property in provinces other than the Muntafiq conformed any better to the provisions of the *ṭāpū* law. The cultivating tribesmen, the real sufferers from such proceedings, did not always take things lying down. In some cases strife would ensue on mere suspicion of a legal claim to land. In one instance, a tribe, suspecting a man of possessing *ṭāpū sanads*, burnt down a whole village to destroy them.[66] Except in the Muntafiq province, where the work of settlement of land rights had just begun in earnest when the Revolution of 1958 overtook it, the monarchic government gave undue weight to these Turkish title deeds in the carrying out of its settlement policy.

The age-old art of "freebooting" appears also to have played a role in the ascent to great wealth of some *sādah* families, the Naqībs of Baṣrah, for example. "Some years ago," wrote an English consul in 1909,

> it was a well-established custom for the Shaikhs of Kuwait and Muḥammarah and the Naqīb of Baṣrah to combine in organizing armed attacks on the inhabitants of Shaṭṭ-il-'Arab and the neighbourhood or in undertaking piratical emprises at the bar or in the river. Eyewitnesses still relate that it was no uncommon sight to see as many as thirty boatloads of armed men leave Muḥammarah after the time of the evening prayer to carry out the hostile designs of this powerful triumvirate, who employed their own servants and retainers for the purpose and shared the spoil among them.[67]

The Naqībs of Baṣrah owned before the First World War about two hundred boats and rich agricultural estates on the banks of Shaṭṭ-il-'Arab,[68] and

toward the close of the period of the monarchy held 25,905 dūnums[69] and the Pepsi Cola Company's distributership in Iraq.

Violence seems to afford also a partial explanation for the affluence of the Ḥafīd al-Barzinjīs, the leading *sādah* family of Sulaimāniyyah, and owners in 1958 of 71,716 dūnums.[70] According to an official report, Shaikh Maḥmūd, their principal representative under the monarchy till his death in the fifties, had in 1918 "apparently succeeded in getting many estates registered in his name in the interim between the departure of the Turks and the arrival of the British. Moreover, in many cases estates seem to have merely been taken by force or cunning by him and his satellites."[71] His father, Shaikh Sa'īd, had been the terror of Sulaimāniyyah. At one point, in 1881, after a revolt against him by the townspeople, he is said to have been instrumental in "extorting" a good deal of money from merchants "without any pretext whatever" and in "the prompt murder" of the few who opposed his demands.[72] It is not clear whether it was in his days or at an earlier point that the family acquired ownership of the town's entire marketplace, a fact which greatly strengthened its position–the foundation of which, however, was laid by more peaceable ancestral figures, notably Shaikh Ma'rūf an-Nūdhī, who achieved prominence as leader of the Qādirī mystic path in the first third of the nineteenth century, and Kāk Aḥmad, his son, to whom was attributed the power of working "miracles."[73] It was apparently on this account, and by virtue of Shaikh Sa'īd's own claim to know "the invisible and the future," that the Barzinjīs enjoyed the "direct protection" of Sultan 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd,[74] which added to their chances in the world. But in the period of the monarchy their wealth decreased due to the frequent rebellions of Shaikh Maḥmūd and the general decline of the dervish orders.

At least a part of the 177,000 dūnums that the royal family owned in 1958[75] was obtained without payment and sometimes through virtual seizure. Thus in 1928, the Challabiyyīn and Hachchām subtribes, who were the customary holders since Ottoman times of the Bughailah estates in Kūt province, were dispossessed of their rights and their first-class land of over 20,000 dūnums granted without charge in *ṭāpū* to ex-King 'Alī, father of the future regent and crown prince, 'Abd-ul-Ilāh.[76]

Under the monarchy, as under the Turks, accumulation of land accrued also from loyalty to the powers that be. In 1935, for example, Sayyid Muḥsin Abū Tabīkh[77] was rewarded with a grant of land in Dīwāniyyah

province for his political services to the government of Yāsīn al-Hāshimī,[78] but lost the grant after the military coup of 1936, only to regain it subsequently.

To round up this brief discussion of the origin of the property of the *sādah*, it is necessary to bring out that not of a few of them acquired free *lazmah* title to state lands merely by installing a pump and making productive use of the lands.[79]

When we turn to examine the political role of the *sādah*, we are confronted with a central fact in their more recent past which needs to be explained: in premonarchic days and in the nineteenth century, many of the standard-bearers of dissent, rebellion, or revival in Iraq came from the stratum of *sādah*.‘Abd-ul-Ghanī Jamīl, who organized the formidable mutiny of 1832 against the Ottoman Governor ‘Alī Riḍā Pāshā al-Laz;[80] Abū-th-Thanā’ al-Alūsī, who was behind the popular disturbance of 1847;[81] the Jamīls and Gailānīs, chiefs severally of the quarters of Qanbar ‘Alī and Bāb-ish-Shaikh, which flew in the face of Midḥat Pāshā in 1869;[82] Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Alūsī, who was exiled from Baghdād in 1902 for his attack upon superstitious beliefs and for allegedly inciting to sedition against the Sultan;[83] ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān an-Naqīb, ‘Īsa Jamīl, ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān Jamīl, ‘Abdallah al-Ḥaidarī, and ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān al-Ḥaidarī, principal founders in 1908 of Ḥizb al-Mashwar–“the Consultative party”–a center of opposition to the Young Turks;[84] Tālib an-Naqīb, who stirred up feelings for Arab autonomy in Baṣrah in the days before the First World War;[85] and Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr, Hādī Āl-Zuwain, ‘Alwān as-Sayyid ‘Abbās, Muḥsin Abū Tabīkh, ‘Alwān al-Yāsirī, Nūr al-Yāsirī, and Hādī al-Mgūṭar, who played prominent parts in the 1920 uprising against the English[86]–all were *sādah*. Was there, one wonders, any inherent unity beneath the outward diversity of all these exertions? Wherein, in other words, lay the roots of this restlessness of Islam’s “nobility”?

The historical behavior of individuals or of social strata seldom proceeds from a single cause. That multiple and complex factors actuated the *sādah* cannot be questioned. Here, however, only a general and incomplete explanation will be provided in the hope of placing their role under the monarchy in its appropriate context.

In the period of the Mamlūks (1749-1831), the *sādah* carried great weight in the all but nominally self-governing pashaliks that constituted the Iraqi provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Their influence, to be sure, differed from place to place according to local conditions, but in view of its religious character, was as stable as the power of the local pashas was transient. In the cities their authority rested in no little degree upon their leadership of mystic orders, in the countryside upon their headship over tribes. Moreover, many of the upper Sunnī *'ulamā'*– and knowledge of the Moslem law and religion was then obviously one of the more socially meaningful aptitudes–were drawn from their ranks. As *'ulamā'* or *murshids* (that is, spiritual guides) of mystic orders, they had a share in the monopoly over education or ideological guidance possessed by these religious elements, and had thus a considerable say in the shaping of the world view of Iraqis. This, as could be imagined, gave them a political leverage with regard to both rulers and people. Aḥmad aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī, a *sayyid* and a *muftī*, was held in high esteem by Sulaimān the Great, pasha of Baghdād (1780-1802).[87] 'Alī as-Suwaidī, also of the *ashrāf* and a religious scholar, had Sulaimān the Little (1806-1810) under his sway.[88] For the anger of such men as 'Abdallah al-Ḥaidarī and his brother Muḥammad As'ad al-Ḥaidarī, both *sādah* and *muftīs* under Daūd Pāshā (1817-1831), "thousands became angry and lined up in rows on their side without troubling to know what provoked them."[89] The *sādah* also enjoyed various privileges, amongst others that of being subject in each city not to the ruling pasha but to a member of their own stratum who, as already noted, was called the *naqīb*. The appointment to this marshalship was for life and, though made by the Ottoman sultan on the recommendation of the local *sādah*, tended to be hereditary in the same family.[90] The *naqīb* had to preserve the purity of the stratum, defend its interests, and, according to an imperial edict of 1695, watch over its spiritual and temporal affairs.[91] In Baghdād, he had a voice in the Dīwān, that is, the assembly of the Pashalik[92] and, because he held his office independently of the pasha's wishes, he was apparently meant to be one of the restraints to every abuse of power on the latter's part. At Baṣrah, the *naqīb* belonged to the *ajalls*–the "exalted"–of the city, who were exempt from any payment on their lands, and had the right to "punish" their peasants. The advice of the *ajails*, offered in council, was also a prerequisite to any action of importance undertaken by the *mutaṣallim–Baṣrah's* chief

official.[93] In Mosul, if Olivier is correct, the pasha was designated, usually from among the members of the Jalīlī family,[94] "by the *a'yān* (notables) assembled"[95] and the *naqīb* was, of course, one of the *a'yān*. More than that, outside the cities, by virtue of the dispersal of authority and the poor communications, the more powerful of the landed *sādah* ruled over their estates almost in undisputed sovereignty.

As the nineteenth century advanced, however, the *sādah* became increasingly involved in a new and adverse process. Impelled by pressures from Europe, and taking advantage of the new communications-river steamers and, eventually, telegraphic lines–the Ottoman sultans began attracting to themselves the elements of power hitherto diffused among a crowd of hereditary princes, tribal shaikhs, and privileged corporate orders. The instruments of the new policy were the *wālīs*– the governors of provinces–who before long succeeded in reasserting the authority of Isṭanbūl in the major cities, although in quite a few regions the supremacy of the sultan continued to be no more than a fiction. At any rate, the *sādah* found themselves being slowly and gradually edged out of their former influence. Under the Walī 'Alī Riḍā Pāshā al-Laz (1831-1842), they became subject for the first time to an enhanced *khānah*, a tax previously levied only on tribal households in the outskirts of cities.[96] Maḥmūd al-Gailānī, their *naqīb* at Baghdād, was also banished to Sulaimaniyyah and replaced by the more tractable 'All al-Gailānī.[97] What could be called "service-*sādah*" and "service-*'ulamā','* that is, *sādah* and *'ulamā'* whose status rested primarily on their service or, to be more accurate, their servility to the sultan, were now increasingly in evidence. Independent-minded *sādah* met sooner or later with the fate of Abī-th-Thanā' al-Alūsī, muftī of Baghdād, who in 1847 lost his post and emoluments and the hold he had on the Mirjān *waqf*, the remaining source of his livelihood.[98] To his complaint in Isṭanbūl that he had become destitute, the minister of finance tersely replied: "The means of subsistence [of needy *'ulamā']* are in heaven and not in the public treasury."[99] Significantly, a decade later, the Wālī 'Umar Pāshā distributed 62,000 piasters to the *naqīb*, muftī, and other dignitaries of Baghdād in an obvious attempt to suborn them into doing his bidding.[100] The manifest pliableness of some of the more prominent *sādah* could not but weaken the moral authority of the stratum as a whole. But a more direct and very hurtful blow fell upon them in 1869, with the opening

of two modern state schools by Midḥat Pāshā,[101] a step that conclusively broke the *‘ulamā’ ’s* monopoly over education. However, during the reign of the pan-Islamically oriented Sultan ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd (1876-1909), the conditions of the *sādah* who led mystic orders took a turn for the better. Thanks to the influence that al-Ḥajj ‘Alī Pāshā, an adherent of the Qādirī path, enjoyed in the *Mā-bain*– the sultan’s antechamber–the grand master of the path, the *naqīb* of Baghdād, stood now in high account.[102] An order of the Sultan issued in 1879 exempted his family from conscription, and made him an advisor to the *wālī* and a permanent member of the *Majlis Idārah* or Administrative Council of Baghdād,[103] a body which was organized a decade or so earlier and, though invested with only consultative functions, acquired in practice–as did the analogous councils simultaneously created in other towns–much say in such matters as the assessment and collection of taxes and the overseeing of public works.[104] Another imperial order consecrated the proceeds of the tithe on state lands to the Qādirī *awqāf*, which the *naqīb* controlled.[105] The *naqīb* of Baṣrah and his family, hereditary chiefs of the Rifā‘ī path, also benefited from the intervention on their behalf of Abū-l-Huda aṣ-Ṣayyādī, another confidant of the sultan.[106] All this on the one hand. On the other hand, other *sādah*, the Ḥaidarīs, for example,[107] were adversely affected by the sultan’s attack on the economic position of the landed class. The sultan distinguished himself by the facility with which he turned choice estates into *saniyyah* or crown property without apparently ever paying for them.[108] By degrees and by some means or other, ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, according to an official British account, annexed “some 30% of the best cultivated lands in the wilāyahs[109] of Baṣrah and Baghdād and considerable areas in the northern provinces.”[110] It is possible, however, that the process began under earlier sultans. In any case, in Baghdād wilāyah alone there were at the end of ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd’s reign thirteen *saniyyah* estates, with a total area of 2,184,800 dūnums or 546,000 hectares.[111]

The worst turn for the *sādah* came with the outbreak of the 1908 Young Turk Revolution. Much to their horror, the revolution did not only radicalize the trend toward direct Turkish rule, but seemed also intent on abolishing financial immunities,[112] “repartitioning the land among the peasantry without infringing on the rights of the landed proprietors,”[113] removing the *sādah* from high places[114] and, most serious of all,

demolishing the old social conceptions, the old modes of thought–indeed, the very Islamic fabric that had hitherto shored up their privileged position and social dominance.[115] Hindered by different regional circumstances or too divided in their individual motives, they were unable to react in unison. Eventually, however, Arab "nationalism" in its incipient form proved to be the palladium of their class–the last dyke of the old order, so to say.

From the foregoing, it should be evident that the conflicts stirred by the Young Turk Revolution, and which precipitated the movement for Arab autonomy, had a distinct social facet, and were not merely ideological or ethnic conflicts, that is, conflicts between secularly minded Young Turks and "good" Moslems, or between "Turks" and "Arabs" (engendered by the Young Turks' tendency, especially after 1913, to exalt the Turks above the Arabs or by their curious attempt to transform the Arabs into Turks). In other words, it is not only concern for their Arab cultural identity or for the old Islamic beliefs that drove the *sādah* and other Arab landed magnates to seek autonomy.[116] They sought it also for the same reason that the privileged Turkish pashas sought the downfall of the Young Turks, that is, to prolong the life of the old social institutions from which they benefited.[117] It is more in this light than as a manifestation of authentic nationalism that the *sādah's* demand for autonomy must be viewed.[118] In essence, the Young Turk Revolution represented the victory of a new social force, the Turkish middle class, and brought to ascendancy the spearhead of this class-its army officers. In this regard, at least, the Young Turk Revolution is of a piece with the 1958 Iraqi Revolution. From the perspective of the Iraq of 1908 it was premature. Iraq was then not ready for it. This is why, while in Turkey the privileged pashas went under, in Iraq the *sādah* stood their ground.

The English conquest, which began in 1914, presented the *sādah* with a graver, if more subtle, challenge. From the beginning, the new conquerors showed a predisposition not only to preserve but also to buttress up the established classes. At the same time, their new ideas, their advanced manner of life, their higher organizing power and sophisticated economic exploitation undermined in manifold unseen ways the old order of society. More than that, their very supremacy, the supremacy of "infidels," was a constant refutation of the past of which the *sādah* were the symbols. Here again the latter were not at one in their reaction. In the view of the *sādah* of Baṣrah–as of this town's landed element, as a whole–the British regime

represented “safety and security of property.”[119] Sayyid Ṭālib an-Naqīb, who in the time of the Young Turks had raised the banner of Arab autonomy, now repeatedly gave voice to his support for a British “Mandate.”[120] At Mosul the local nationalist organization, which consisted of young “lawyers, doctors, schoolmasters, and the like,” was broken up in 1920, thanks largely “to the loyalty of the leading *ashrāf* in prompting the interests of order and of government”.[121] In Baghdād, ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān al-Gail-ānī, the *naqīb*, led the way in subservience. “I recognize your victory,” he told the English, “and when I am asked what is my opinion as to the continuance of British rule, I reply I am the subject of the victor.”[122] On the other hand, Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr, a Shī‘ī *sayyid-‘ālim* from Sāmar-rā’; Aḥmad Dāūd, a Sunnī *sayyid-‘ālim* from East Baghdād; and Yūsuf as-Suwaidī, a Sunnī former Sharī‘ah[123] judge from al-Karkh[124]–all men of middling income though of high status–exerted their influence upon the populace of the capital against the English and took active parts in inciting the tribes to rebellion.[125] Under their patronage, a great deal of fraternizing between Sunnīs and Shī‘īs took place in 1919 and 1920 at joint religious-political gatherings in Baghdād’s mosques,[126] an event without precedent in the annals of Iraq.[127] But the *sādah* that played conspicuous roles in the ensuing armed uprising of the summer and autumn of 1920 were the principal tribal *sādah* of the Euphrates’ Shāmiyyah Division,[128] namely, Hādī Āl-Zuwain, ‘Alwān as-Sayyid ‘Abbās, ‘Alwān and Nūr al-Yāsirī, Hādī Āl-Mgūṭar, and Muḥsin Abū Ṭabīkh,[129] all large landed proprietors.[130] Of course, it was not “national” freedom that these *sādah* were after, but the freedom to rule over their estates and peasants in the way to which they had been accustomed, that is, by and large, as they pleased. Under the Ottomans, on account of the remoteness of their region from Baghdād and the slight strength of the governing authority, they lived, more often than not, conformably to their own norms and interests. The direct control that the English forced upon the area and the unprecedented regularity and efficiency with which they proceeded to collect revenue were all the more galling to the *sādah* by reason of the fact that from early 1915, when the Turks had to abandon Shāmiyyah, till the advent of the English in 1917, the *sādah* enjoyed complete independence and were relieved of the necessity of paying any tax whatever. Alongside this–and very much involved in their revolt–was another factor that historians of this period have completely

overlooked: the sharp decline in their agricultural income caused by the British management, or rather mismanagement, of the Euphrates water. “To the Shāmiyyah (landowner),” wrote the British political officer of this district about a year and a half before the revolt, “the rice crop. . . is his deity, for it represents his wealth, on which his influence rests. Touch his crop and you touch his pocket. How far it was touched may be judged when we remember that previous to our control a good rice crop produced 90,000 tons gross. Our first year of management produced 600 tons gross and our second 20,000 tons.”[131]

At the root of the trouble was the way the British regulated the flow of water from the Hindiyyah Barrage. The old practice was to send all the water down the Shāmiyyah branch of the Euphrates in the summer, and all down the Ḥillah branch in the winter. This ensured two good crops. The scheme that the British introduced in 1917 was to distribute the water by weekly rotation. “Actually,” according to the Shāmiyyah officer, “the rotation worked out as eight days in favour of Ḥillah and six days in favour of Shāmiyyah. In almost every case, when the time came for the Shāmiyyah rotation, only partial rotation was given, possibly owing to the claims of navigation down the Ḥillah branch.”[132] In placing emphasis upon the consequent disaster to the local economy, and on the other just mentioned material elements in the revolt, it is far from our intention to deny the role of contingent personal factors or of moral influences, such as the undisputed power that the religious ideas antithetic to “infidel” rule had over the peasant-tribesmen of an area as closely connected with the Shī‘ī holy cities as Shāmiyyah.

The revolt of 1920 failed to rid the country of alien power but, by bringing the Shī‘īs and Sunnīs closer together, strengthened national sentiment which, as it grew in intensity and wide masses became seized of it, worked to the detriment not only of English interests but also of the *sādah’s* own historical position. In the meantime, however, the English continued to be uppermost in Iraq, ruling in the next decade, on account of the inadequacy of their financial resources, by indirect means, it is true, but in all essential respects according to their convenience. Moreover, even though the *sādah* of Shāmiyyah suffered for their rebellion, the *sādah* stratum as a whole now gained politically. Thus in the period of the

"Mandate"–that is, from 1921, when, upon the initiative of the English, the monarchy was instituted and Faiṣal of Arabia raised to the throne, till 1932, when the effective internal control of the country passed into his hands–9 out of the 13 appointments to the premiership and 35 out of the other 113 cabinet seats went to the *sādah*. In other words, as is evident from Tables 7-2 and 7-3, they had a larger share in the government than any of the other Iraqi social strata, not excepting the ex-Sharīfian officers from among whom were drawn the king's closest adherents. This is easily explained.

In the first place, it is clear that the English sought to control the people partly by means of what they conceived to be their natural leaders, and looked upon the *sādah* in this light, and in particular the *sādah* that guided mystic orders, such as ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān al-Gailānī, the first premier of Iraq, or that were tribally connected, such as ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn, premier in the years 1922-1923, 1925-1926, and 1928-1929 (consult Table 7-4). It is also just as clear that the English had a somewhat exaggerated view of the influence of the *sādah* upon the populace. As noted elsewhere, the *sādah* had not been unaffected by the advance of direct Ottoman rule. The Sunnīs among them had also, to a degree, been weakened by their increasing dependence upon state power. But, of course, on the whole the *sādah* still had riches and strong connections, and still mattered in the social scale.

TABLE 7-2

Appointments to Premiership under the Monarchy; Share of the Various Governing Classes and Strata

Years	Total no. of appointments	Share of sadāh		Share of ex-sharīfian officers		Share of old "aristocracy" of officials		Share of chalabī families		Share of other classes and strata	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1921-1932 (Period of "Mandate")	13	9[a]	69.2	4[b]	30.8	–	–	–	–	–	–
1932-1936	8	3[a]	37.5	4[c]	50.0	1[d]	12.5	–	–	–	–
1936-1941 (Period of Military Coups)	8	3[e]	37.5	4	50.0	1	12.5	–	–	–	–
1941-1946 (Period of "Second British Occupation")	9	1	11.1	5	55.6	1	11.1	2	22.2	–	–
1947-1958	20	2	10.0	9	45.0	3	15.0	1	5.0	5[f]	25.0
Total	58	18[g]	31.0	26[h]	44.8	6[d]	10.4	3	5.2	5	8.6

[a]Includes the appointment of a *sayyid* who was at the same time an ex-Sharīfian officer.

[b]Excludes the appointments of a ex-Sharīfian officer who was at the same time a *sayyid*

[c]Excludes the appointments of two ex-Sharīfian officers, one of whom was also an "aristocrat"-official and the other a *sayyid*.

[d]Includes the appointment of an "aristocraft" -official who was at the same time an ex-Sharīfian officer.

[e]Includes the appointment of a *sayyid* who was also a senior army officer.

[f]One newly risen, slave-issuing landowner; one senior army officer from the military middle stratum; and three senior civil servants from the middle or lower middle class.

[g]Includes two appointments of a *sayyid* who was at the same time an ex-Sharīfian officer.

[h]Excludes three appointments. See notes b, c.

Source: See Table 7-4.

In the second place, although the monarch or, to be precise, Faiṣal I, through whom above all the English ruled Iraq, was beholden to them for his throne, he was not strictly speaking their tool, or rather was their tool only to the extent that suited his purposes or when he had no other choice. Understandably, they did not desire that he should attract too much power to himself, for fear that he would become too independent and less accommodating. Just, therefore, as in the countryside they built up the tribal shaikhs as counterweights to his authority, so too in Baghdād at the level of government they balanced him with the *sādah* and other representatives of the old propertied families.

The *sādah*, who played the game against the king, acted from varying motives. Some, no doubt, merely gratified by this means their desire for the honors of office. Others, like ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān al-Gailānī, the *naqīb* of Baghdād, resented the kingship of Faiṣal, an imported *sayyid*, and had had hopes that the crown would fall to the lot of one of their own number.[133] Those with large vested interests deemed it also safer to propitiate the occupying power, the more so as they suspected that the nationalist ex-Sharīfian officers, upon whom the king leaned, desired their "extinction,"[134] Over and above that, many *sādah* took it ill that the king should favor the ex-Sharīfian officers, most of whom came from lower middle class families or from humbler backgrounds. In 1927, when Faisal was preparing to go to London to confer with the British government on the matter of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, and it became known that he would be attended by Jaʻfar al-ʻAskarī or Nūrī as-Saʻīd, both ex-Sharīfian officers and members of the Cabinet, Yūsuf as-Suwaidī hurried to see Faiṣal and requested that his son Nājī accompany the king, urging the "impropriety" of relying on such men as al-ʻAskarī and as-Saʻīd. It distressed him that "His Majesty" should have taken into his confidence "other than the *ashrāf* and the upper class of people."[135]

TABLE 7-3

Ministerial Appointments under the Monarchy (Excluding Appointments to Premiership): Share of the Principal Governing Classes and Strata

Years	Total no. of appointments	Share of sādah		Share of tribal shaikhly families		Share of old "aristocracy" of officials	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1921-1932 (Period of "Mandate")	113	35[a]	31.0	2	1.8	16[b]	14.2
1932-1936	57	10[c]	17.5	–	–	12[d]	21.1
1936-1941 (Period of Military Coups)	65	13[e]	20.0	–	–	17	26.1
1941-1946 (Period of "Second British Occupation")	89	10	11.2	3	3.4	24[d]	27.0
1947-1958	251	16	6.4	15	6.0	41[f]	16.3
Total	575	84	14.6	20	3.5	110	19.1

Share of chalabī families		Share of other wealthy mercantile families		Share of ex-Sharīfian officers[g]		Share of other (senior) army officers[g]		Share of other strata[h]	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
14	12.3	11	9.7	19	16.8	7	6.2	9	8.0
2	3.5	3	5.3	14	24.5	4	7.0	12	21.1
3	4.6	–	–	7	10.7	2[i]	3.1	23	35.5
10	11.2	3	3.4	15	16.9	2	2.2	22	24.7
31	12.3	18	7.2	19	7.6	24	9.5	87	34.7
60	10.4	35	6.1	74	12.9	39	6.8	153	26.6

[a]Includes four appointments of a *sayyid* who was at the same time an ex-Sharīfian officer

[b]Includes four appointments of an "aristocraf"-official who was also an ex-Sharīfian officer.

[c]Includes two appointments of a *sayyid* who was at the same time an ex-Sharīfian officer.

[d]Includes one appointment of an "aristocraf"-official who was also an ex-Sharīfian officer.

[e]Includes six appointments of a *sayyid* who was also a senior army officer.

[f]Includes three appointments of an "aristocraf'-official who was also an ex-Sharīfian officer.

[g]The senior army officers and the ex-Sharīfian officers included in these columns were by origin from the lower middle or humbler classes.

[h]Overwhelmingly senior civil servants or independent professionals from the middle or lower middle classes.

[i]Excludes six appointments of a senior army officer who was at the same time a *sayyid*.

The foremost *sayyid* to lend himself to the balancing tactic of the English was the aged *naqīb* of Baghdād,[136] who since their conquest of the country had consistently brought his influence to bear on their behalf.[137] On being entrusted with the premiership in 1921, he made a point of emphasizing that the king's government was "constitutional" and "limited by law."[138] His Cabinet, which was "generally considered as being of British manufacture,"[139] refused in 1922 to provide a "larger sum" for the king's forces, protesting a financial stringency:[140] Faiṣal had asked for an army of 6,000 men, but the English would allow him only 4,500,[141] thus maintaining the balance in favor of the Levies, which were under British officers and had a strength of 4,984.[142] In the same year, when the draft of the first unequal Anglo-Iraqi treaty[143] came up for discussion in the Cabinet, the *naqīb* betrayed a disposition to accept it, while Ja'far al-'Askarī, the minister of defence and the king's man, dragged his feet, disabusing the *naqīb* of any idea he might have had of employing the army to put down antitreaty feeling.[144] It became apparent that the king himself stood for the repudiation of the "Mandate," which the treaty scarcely veiled, but not of England's support–doubting, as he did, that his kingship would as yet survive the withdrawal of English arms. At the same time, in the hope of placing himself in a better bargaining position, he went to the length of secretly financing popular antitreaty endeavors through Bāqir al-Ḥillī, one of his chamberlains.[145] Indeed, at one point, the out-and-out nationalists were openly saying that their condemnation of the cabinet had the king's approval.[146] Apprised that Faiṣal was compassing the fall of the *naqīb*, the British high commissioner[147] made haste to impress upon him "the great importance" at "this critical juncture" of the *naqīb' s* remaining in office until the issue of the treaty had been resolved.[148] But Faiṣal kept upon his course. In the end, on August 26, 1922, after the resignation of the *naqīb* and as popular protests against the treaty mounted, the high commissioner, bypassing the king, who had suddenly been struck down with an attack of appendicitis, stepped in, dismissed un-pliant provincial governors, suppressed "extremist" parties[149] and arrested and banished their leaders, and, by "punitive bombing," subdued insurrectionary tribesmen in the middle and lower Euphrates.[150] After his recovery, the king had, upon the high commissioner's own demand, to express publicly his "appreciation for the prompt policy and the necessary measures" taken during his temporary

eclipse.[151] He also had to reappoint the *naqīb* as premier,[152] whose new cabinet now "unanimously" accepted the treaty.[153]

TABLE 7-4

Prime Ministers under the Monarchy (23 August 1921 to 14 July 1958)

Name and no. of appointments to premiership	*Term of office*	*Nation and sect*	*Date and place of birth*
ʿAbd-ur-Raḥmān al-Gaylānī, 2	Sept. 1921-Aug. 1922 Aug. 1922-Nov. 1922	Arab,[a] Sunnī	1841, Baghdād
ʿAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʿdun, 4	Nov. 1922-Nov. 1923 June 1925-Nov. 1926 Jan. 1928-Jan. 1929 Sept. 1929-Nov. 1929	Arab, Sunnī	1879, Baṣrah
Jaʿfar al-ʿAskarī, 2	Nov. 1923-Aug. 1924 Nov. 1926-Jan. 1928	Arabized Kurd, Sunnī	1885, Baghdād, originally from ʿAskar[d]
Yasīn al-Hāshimī,[f] 2	Aug. 1924-June 1925 March 1935-Oct. 1936	Arab,[g] Sunnī	1884, Baghdād
Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, 3	April 1929-Aug. 1929 Feb. 1946-May 1946 Feb. 1950-Sept. 1950	Arab, Sunnī	1891, Baghdād
Nājī as-Suwaidī,[j] 1	Nov. 1929-March 1930	Arab, Sunnī	1882, Baghdād
Nūrī as-Saʿīd,[k] 14	[l]	Turko-Arab, Sunnī	1888, Baghdād, said to be originally from Tūzkhūrmātū
Nājī Shawkat,[m] 1	Nov. 1932-March 1933	Arabized Circassian, Sunnī	1891, Baghdād
Rashīd ʿAlī al-Gaylanī, 4	March-Sept. 1933 Sept.-Oct. 1933 March 1940-Jan. 1941 April 1941-May 1941	Arab,[a] Sunnī	1892, Baghdād
Jamīl al-Midfaʿī, 7	[p]	Kurdo-Arab, Sunnī	1890, Mosul
ʿAlī Jawdat al-Ayyūbī, 3	Aug. 1934-Feb. 1935 Dec. 1949-Feb. 1950 June 1957-Dec. 1957	Arab, Sunnī	1886, Mosul

Education	*Occupation*	*Class origin*
Traditional religious instruction	*Naqīb al-Ashrāf*[b] of Baghdād and shaikh of the Qādirī mystic order	Of an upper landowning wealthy *ashrāf* family which for centuries provided the marshals of the *ashrāf* and the chiefs of the Qādirī order
Tribal College and Military Academy, Istanbūl	Ex-lieutenant colonel and aide to Ottoman Sultan; member, Ottoman parliament, 1908-18; ex-minister of justice and interior	Of an upper landowning wealthy *ashrāf* family of Ḥijāzī origin which for long supplied the Shaikhs *al-Mashāyikh*[c] of the Muntafiq tribal confederation
Military Academy and Staff College, Istanbūl	Ex-Ottoman colonel; ex-Sharīfian officer;[e] governor of Aleppo, 1919-20; ex-minister of defence	Military middle class; son of an Ottoman army brigadier
Military Academy, Istanbūl	Ex-Ottoman major general; chief of staff, Sharīfian army, 1919; ex-minister of works and communications	Official middle class; son of the *mukhtār* (chief) of the Barūdiyyah quarter of Baghdād, who is said to have been a *sayyid*
Law schools, Istanbūl and Paris	Ex-dean, Baghdād Law School; ex-minister of education	Of an upper landowning family of *'ulamā'*[h] and *ashrāf* who claimed descent from the 'Abbasid caliphs; son of a *sharī'ah*[i] judge
Law School, Istanbūl	Ex-Ottoman senior civil servant; ex-minister of justice	Of an upper landowning family of *'ulamā'* and *ashrāf* who claimed descent from the 'Abbasid caliphs; son of a *sharī'ah* judge
Military Academy and Staff College, Istanbūl	Ex-Sharīfian officer; military advisor to Amir Faiṣal, 1918; ex-deputy commander-in-chief of Iraqi army	Official lower middle class; son of a government *mudaqqiqchī* (auditor)
Law School, Istanbūl	Ex-Sharīfian officer; ex-governor of Baghdād; ex-minister of interior	Class of upper bureaucrat-landowners; said to be descended from the last Mamlūk, Dāūd Pasha, Beglerbegi[n] of Baghdād, Baṣrah, and Shahrizūr (1816-31); son of an Ottoman district governor
Law School, Baghdād	Lawyer; ex-member Court of Appeal; ex-minister of interior	Middle landowning *ashrāf* class; son of a landed *mudarris*[o] from an obscure branch of the family of Naqīb al-Ashrāf
Military Academy, Istanbūl	Ex-Sharīfian officer; commander, Damascus garrison 1919; ex-minister of interior and finance	Military lower middle class; son of a poor Ottoman captain
Military Academy, Istanbūl	Ex-Sharīfian officer; ex-governor of Baṣrah; ex-minister of interior; ex-chief of Royal Court	Official lower middle class; son of a chief sergeant in the gendarmerie

Name and no. of appointments to premiership	*Term of office*	*Nation and sect*	*Date and place of birth*
Ḥikmat Sulaimān, 1	Oct. 1936-Aug. 1937	descended from a Georgian who turned Moslem; Sunnī	1885, Baghdād
Ṭaha Al-Hāshimī,[q] 1	Feb.-April 1941	Arab,[g] Sunnī	1887, Baghdād
Ḥamdi al-Pāchachī, 2	June-Aug. 1944 Aug. 1944-Jan. 1946	Arab, Sunnī[r]	1888, Baghdād
Arshad al-'Umarī, 2	June-Nov. 1946 April-July 1954	Arab, Sunnī	1888, Mosul
Ṣāliḥ Jabr, 1	March 1947-Jan. 1948	Arab, Shī'ī	1900, Nāṣiriyyah
Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr, 1	Jan.-June 1948	Arab, Shī'ī	1887, Sāmarrā'
Muzāḥim al-Pāchachī,[u] 1	June 1948-Jan. 1949	Arab, Sunnī	1890, Baghdād
Muṣṭafa al-'Umarī,[w] 1	July-Nov. 1952	Arab, Sunnī	1898, Mosul
Nūr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd, 1	Nov. 1952-Jan. 1953	Arabized Kurd, Sunnī	1897, Arbīl
Fāḍil aj-Jamālī, 2	Sept. 1954-March 1954 March-April 1954	Arab, Shī'ī	1907, Kāḍhimiyyah
'Abd-ul-Wahhāb Mirjān, 1	Dec. 1957-March 1958	Arab, Shī'ī	1909, Ḥillah
Aḥmad Mukhtār Babān, 1	May-July 1958	Arabized Kurd, Sunnī	1900, Baghdād

Education	*Occupation*	*Class origin*
Imperial Civil School, Istanbūl	Director of education, Baghdād 1908; ex-minister of interior	Class of wealthy bureaucrat-landowners; grandson of the *kahya* (chief minister) of Dāūd Pasha; son of an Ottoman district governor; half-brother of General Maḥmūd Shawkat, leader of the 1909 coup against Sultan 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd
Military Academy and Staff College, Istanbūl	Ex-director general of education; ex-chief of staff, Iraqi army; ex-minister of defence	Official middle class; son of the *mukhtār* (chief) of the Bārūdiyyah quarter of Baghdad, who is said to have been a *sayyid*
Imperial Civil School, Istanbūl	Professor, School of Law, 1913-16; landowner, merchant	Wealthy landowning *chalabī*[s] class; son of a landowner and descendant of a *Ra's-ut-Tujjār* (chief of the merchants) in the time of Dāūd Pasha
Royal Engineering School, Istanbūl	Engineer; ex-minister of agriculture; ex-mayor of Baghdād	Of a family of bureaucrat-landowners of high standing who claim descent from 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the 2nd caliph of Islam; son of a landowner
School of Law, Baghdād	Ex-judge; ex-governor of Karbalā'; ex-minister of education	Poor artisan class; son of a carpenter
Traditional Shī'ī education	Man of religion;[t] long the president of the Senate	Religious propertied *sayyid* class; son of a *sayyid-ālim*
School of Law, Baghdād	Lawyer; ex-minister of works; ex-chargé d'affaires in Paris and elsewhere[v]	Impoverished *chalabī* class; son of petty government official
Law School, Baghdād	Ex-provincial governor; ex-minister of interior	Of a family of bureaucrat-landowners who claim descent from the Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb; son of a landed government official
Military Academy, Istanbūl and Staff College, Baghdād	Ex-chief of the General Staff	Military middle class; son of an Ottoman army colonel
Ph.D. in Education, Columbia University	Ex-director general of education; ex-minister for foreign affairs	Religious middle class; son of religious shaikh and *muzawwer* (sanctuary guide)
Law School, Baghdād	Landowner; ex-minister of economics and finance; ex-president of Chamber of Deputies	Newly risen, slave-issuing, wealthy entrepreneurial landowning class; grandson of a slave of the tribe of Albū Sulṭān; son of a contractor, wheat-mill proprietor, and real estate owner
Law School, Baghdād	Ex-governor; ex-judge; ex-minister of justice and social affairs	Upper bureaucrat-landowning class; son of a chief of the Gendarmerie and scion of a well-known family that provided in the 18th and early 19th century the rulers of **Sulaimāniyyah**

[a]His family came to Baghdād in the 11th century from Gilān, a district in the north of Persia, and may not have been Arab by origin.

[b]Marshal of the *ashrāf*. The *ashrāf* or *sādah* (plural of *sharīf* or *sayyid)* are claimants of descent from the Prophet Muḥammad recognized by their contemporaries.

[c]Paramount chiefs.

[d]A Kurdish village in Chamchemāl district in the province of Kirkūk.

[e]The term “Sharifian officers” refers to those officers in the Ottoman army who at one point or another during World War I or shortly after its conclusion abandoned the Ottomans and attached themselves to the fortunes of the family of Sharif Ḥusain, and particularly of his son Amir Faiṣal, later King of Syria and then of Iraq.

[f]His real name before his adherence to the Hashemites in 1918 was Yasīn Ḥilmī.

[g]He has occasionally been identified as being of Turkish (Seljūq) descent.

[h]Men learned in religion.

[i]Islamic law.

[j]Brother of Tawfīq as-Suwaidī.

[k]Brother-in-law of Ja‘far al-‘Askarī.

[l]March-Oct. 1930; Oct. 1930-Oct. 1932; Dec. 1938-April 1939; April 1939-Feb. 1940; Feb. 1940-March 1940; Oct. 1941-Oct. 1942; Oct. 1942-Dec. 1943; Dec. 1943-June 1944; Nov. 1946-March 1947; Jan. 1949-Dec. 1949; Sept. 1950-July 1952; Aug. 1954-Dec. 1955; Dec. 1955-June 1957; and March-May 1958.

[m]Related by marriage to al-Gaylānī family.

[n]Governor and pāsha of the highest rank.

[o]Religious teacher.

[p]Nov. 1933-Feb. 1934; Feb.-Aug. 1934; March 4-March 16, 1935; Aug. 1937-Dec. 1938; June-Oct. 1941; Jan.-May 1953; and May-Sept. 1953.

[q]A brother of Yasīn al-Hāshimī.

[r]His grandfather is said to have had leanings towards the ‘Alawī sect.

[s]The *chalabīs* were merchants of high standing but not necessarily of high income.

[t]By reason of his closeness to the regent, ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh, aṣ-Ṣadr was at one point dubbed “the Rasputin of Iraq.”

[u]A cousin of Ḥamdi al-Pāchachī.

[v]Muzāḥim al-Pāchachī occupied briefly in 1930 the post of minister of interior, which he had to relinquish after a general strike against him due to his betrayal of his party, the Nationalist party, and his misappropriation of its documents.

[w]A relative of Arshad al-‘Umarī.

These developments gave instant reassurance to a party named Al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al-‘Irāqī (The Iraqi Liberal party), which embraced the pro-British *sādah*, tribal shaikhs, and other men of property, and which had for president Sayyid Maḥmūd, the eldest son of the *naqīb*, and for secretary Fakhrī Jamīl, another *sayyid* of Baghdād.[154] The party had been formed during the crisis just surmounted, and had for guiding principle “the acceptance of relations with Great Britain on the basis of the treaty.”[155] Upon this party, as upon the *naqīb*, the nationalist ex-Sharīfian officers,

including the king's men, threw presently the odium of anything in the treaty depreciatory of the country's independence.[156]

With the signing of the treaty by the Cabinet, the English had no further use for the *naqīb*. He was too old,[157] too slow to come to a decision, too out of accord with the general mood of the country. The British method of "ruling without governing," that is, of "exercising control through an ostensibly independent native government," to use the words of a British secretary of state for the colonies,[158] required, in a land as difficult to bridle as Iraq, a premier of greater vigor and readier mind, and one that could form a more effective counterpoise to Faiṣal. The change was, from the English point of view, all the more needed not only by reason of insistent Turkish claims to the oil-rich Mosul wilāyah, but also because the treaty had yet to be ratified by a Constituent Assembly, and a movement to boycott the impending elections was already afoot, led by diehard Shī'ī divines.[159] Accordingly, on 20 November 1922, the *naqīb* yielded his place to the forty-three-year-old 'Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa'dūn, a scion of a well-known family of *sādah* who, as already mentioned, had in Ottoman times for long provided the paramount chiefs of the Muntafiq Tribal Confederation.

TABLE 7-5

Summary of Table 7-4

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	No. of premiers[a]	%	*No. of individuals*[b]	%	*Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq*
Moslems					
Shī'ī Arabs	5	8.6	4	17.3	44.9
Sunnī Arabs	23	39.7	10	43.4	28.6
Sunnī Turko-Arabs	14	24.1	1	4.4	–
Sunnī Arabs possibly of Turkish (Seljūq) origin	3	5.2	2	8.7	–
Sunnī Arabized Circassian	1	1.7	1	4.4	–
Sunnī Kurdo-Arabs	7	12.1	1	4.4	–
Kurds	4[c]	6.9	3[c]	13.0	12.7
Sunnī of Georgian origin	1	1.7	1	4.4	–
Turkomans	–	–	–	–	3.4
Persians	–	–	–	–	3.3
Jews	–	–	–	–	.3
Christians	–	–	–	–	6.4
Sabeans	–	–	–	–	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	–	–	.1
Total	58	100.0	23	100.0	100.0

Place of Birth

	No. of individuals[b]
Baghdād	13
Mosul	4
Sāmarrā'	1
Kāḍhimiyyah	1
Baṣrah	1
Nāṣiriyyah	1
Ḥillah	1
Arbīl	1
Total	23

Education

		No. of individuals[b]
Traditional religious education		2
Military education		8
At Istanbūl	7	
At Istanbūl & Baghdād	1	
Legal education		9
At Istanbūl	2	
At Istanbūl & Paris	1	
At Baghdād	6	
Other		
Engineering, Istanbūl		1
Education, Columbia University		1
Imperial Civil School, Istanbūl		2
Total		23

Share of the Ex-Sharīfian Officers in the Premierships

	No. of premiers[a]	*No. of individuals*[b]
Ex-Sharīfian officers	29	6
Other army officers	6	3
Civilians	23	14
Total	58	23

Age Group in Year of First Accession to Premiership

	No. of individuals[b]
38	2
40-44	6
45-49	5
50-54	3
55-59	5
61	1
80	1
Total	23

Class Origin

		No. of individuals[b]	%
Classes or strata of low income		1	4.4
Artisan	1		
Classes or strata of lower middle income		4	17.3
Officials	2		
Official of *chalabī*[d] background	1		
Army officer	1		
Classes or strata of middle income		6	26.1
Officials	2		
Army officers	2		
Landowner-*sayyid*[e]	1		
'Ālim[f]	1		
Classes or strata of high income		12	52.2
Landowning *ṣūfī* shaikh[g]-*sayyid*	1		
Landowning tribal shaikh-*sayyid*	1		
Landowning *sādah-'ulamā'*	3		
Bureaucrat-landowners of upper status	5		
Landowning *chalabī*	1		
Newly risen slave-descending entrepreneurial landowner	1		
Total		23	100.0

[a]In this column, individuals are counted as many times as the number of terms for which they were appointed.

[b]In this column, individuals who were appointed for more than one term are counted only once.

[c]All Arabized Kurds.

[d]A *chalabī* is a merchant of high status but not necessarily of high income.

[e]A *sayyid* (plural: *sādah)* is a claimant of descent from the Prophet Muḥammad.

[f]An *'ālim* (plural: *'ulamā)* is a man learned in religion.

[g]A *ṣūfī shaikh* is a leader of a mystic order.

Though of tribal descent and tribally backed, 'Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa'dūn did not have the outlook of a tribal leader.[160] By education at a special college for the sons of shaikhs and at the Military Academy in Isṭanbūl, and

through his service first as an aide-de-camp of Sultan ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd, and then as a ten-year member of the Ottoman Parliament,[161] he had become something of a modernist. This, his background, his strength of will, and the acumen which he is said to have possessed, helped him to climb quickly to political heights; but his most valuable asset under the circumstances lay in the fact that he was already close in the confidence of the English. At any rate, in the next seven years he filled a large place in the country's political life: he led four Cabinets,[162] and when out of office had on occasions a voice in the making of policy or the selection of ministers largely by virtue of his control over the Progressives (Ḥizb-ut-Taqaddum), a Parliamentary majority grouping founded in 1925 and, in basic orientation and social composition, almost indistinguishable from the defunct Liberal party.[163]

The king, at least at certain points, looked gloomily upon the ascent of ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn, for, knowing that there was as yet little affection or regard among the people for the Crown, he feared that the rise of a strong personality could well render the monarchy redundant. And there were grounds for his fear. On 20 August 1925, for example, a number of *sādah*, including Ṭālib an-Naqīb, Aḥmad Bāshaʻyān, Muḥammad Amīn Bāshaʻyān, and ʻAbd-ul-Karīm as-Saʻdūn, brother of ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn, met with other landowners at the palace of the Bāshaʻyāns in Baṣrah, and discussed the question of doing away with the king and setting up a republic "under the protection of the British," and with ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn as president. At the gathering ʻAbd-ul-Karīm as-Saʻdūn affirmed that "the Bāshaʻyāns, all influential Baghdād families, the Muntafiq tribes,[164] the *ʻulamāʼ*, and many others" were on his brother's side and in his favor, whereupon everyone present voiced support for the idea. The meeting also called for a British-protected autonomous Baṣrah.[165]

It is more than probable that the English encouraged the expression of such separatist or republican tendencies. Their relations with Faiṣal had apparently hit a snag. The continued union of the Mosul Wilāyah with Iraq, which had, earlier that year, been tied to the granting of oil rights to the nucleus of what came to be known as the Iraq Petroleum Company,[166] was now made also contingent upon the extension of the period of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty and of its subsidiary Financial and Military Agreements from four to twenty-five years, or to the date of Iraq's entry into the League of Nations. The oil rights were conceded on 14 March 1925, but to the new

condition Faiṣal, it would seem, demurred, though eventually he gave way. As far as the English were concerned, the gathering at the Bāshaʻyān palace may have been meant to serve just such purpose, that is, to bring Faiṣal to a more tractable frame of mind.

Be that as it may, it is significant that in the preceding year–on 23 May 1924, to be exact–ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn himself sought, with two other politicians,[167] to impress upon High Commissioner Henry Dobbs that the country was, as his oriental secretary put it, "sick and puzzled by the spectacle of two Kings in Brentford, the King and the High Commissioner, and that the influence of either the one or the other ought to be eliminated entirely," and "hinted that it was the King who should disappear."[168]

For his part, Faiṣal sought in various ways to abate the power of ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn: he weaned away part of his support by palace favors; infiltrated his own men into the Progressive party and divided it against itself;[169] encouraged rival political figures–Yasīn al-Hāshimī and Rashīd ʻAlī al-Gailānī, among others; and in private conversations made plain that ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn was only working the will of the English.[170]

Quite apart from his ultimate intentions, ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn in effect upheld, at least for a time, the subordination of Iraq to British power. In 1922, as minister of justice, he spoke at a special session of the cabinet "strongly" in favor of the "immediate" acceptance of the treaty.[171] In 1923, as premier, he put down with an iron hand the movement against participation in the elections for the Constituent Assembly, and arrested and exiled the anti-treaty Shīʻī '*ulamā*' who had guided it.[172] In 1925, again as premier, he defiantly announced that he was "not afraid" to declare his inability to establish "peace and order" without the "co-operation" of the British government.[173] In 1926, after initial protests against the application of the new twenty-five-year term to the Financial and Military Agreements attached to the treaty, he persuaded his majority in Parliament to agree to the stipulation without debate.[174] In 1928–after an interval in which Faiṣal, by divisive tactics, scattered this majority and thus smoothed the way for Jaʻfar al-ʻAskarī, his favorite candidate, to fill the premiership for upward of a year[175]–ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin, who, in compliance with British wishes,[176] was back in office and who, in the words of Faiṣal, "would not object to anything the British did" now "agreed with them," again according to Faiṣal, "to secure the election of a pro-British parliament to facilitate

British policy, particularly the passage of the Military and Financial Agreements under the new Treaty,"[177]–that of 1927, which Faiṣal himself had negotiated under unequal conditions, and which in his opinion was, from the standpoint of Iraq's aspirations, an "absolute failure."[178] But ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin was, as we shall see, to behave in a thoroughly unexpected way.

In seemingly advancing England's aims, ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn, it was sometimes believed, sought merely to advance himself. But that, perhaps, was to put the unworthiest construction upon his motives. Faiṣal saw the matter differently, at least in 1928: he held that Ibn Saʻūd and the English were working in concert, and that " ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin and all the Saʻdūns are secretly in favour of Ibn Saʻūd and secretly believe in Wahhabī doctrines."[179] ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin's own explanation was that only "a cordial and complete understanding" with Britain for "a reasonable period" could have given the new kingdom the stability it needed: the elements of which it was composed were too diverse in their inclinations, their ties too tenuous, and national consciousness as yet undeveloped and, on top of this, the Turks bade fair to deny it of its Mosul province, not to mention the closeness of the French in the north, the differences between the Hashemite and Saʻūdī families in the south, and the not-so-friendly Iran in the east.[180]

In the closing year of his life, to the surprise of friend and foe, ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin altered course: in late December 1928 he took the side of the king against the high commissioner on a number of outstanding problems, including that of Iraq's demand for immediate and undivided control of its own armed forces, and in January 1929 resigned over the issue.[181] The English had been holding too tightly their leading strings. Popular expressions of reproof had also begun to affect ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin. In nationalist circles, however, his change of line was taken for "a ruse."[182] And when ten months later, in his fourth and last term of office, he seemed to be abandoning the demand for responsibility over the armed forces in return for a British promise to support Iraq's entry into the League of Nations in 1932, voices were again raised reproaching him in unmeasured terms with lack of loyalty. The sequel is a matter of history and is soon told: caught between English immovableness and hard-hitting political opponents, and, under fire, deserted by his own followers, he committed suicide on 13 November 1929. The testament that he left is well worth quoting:

> Forgive me, my dear son . . . , for my crime. I have grown weary of this life in which I found neither happiness nor honour . . .. The people expect service; the English refuse. I have no supporter. The Iraqis who call for independence are weak and helpless and very remote from independence. They are incapable of appreciating the advice of men of honour like myself. They think that I am a traitor to my country and a slave of the English. What a grievous affliction! I who sacrificed myself . . . and bore disdain and manifold humiliations for this blessed land in which my forefathers lived happily . . . . ”[183]

It would also seem that ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin found no solace at home, which his wife, a difficult Turkish woman, is said to have turned into an “inferno.”[184] This added to his state of depression.

In the period of the “Mandate,” the *sādah* did not work in concert or act in a uniform way. Some, like the Kurdish Jāf Begzādas, chiefs of the Jāf tribe and owners of nearly all the agricultural lands in the district of Ḥalabjah, behaved in the manner of the *naqīb* of Baghdād, identifying themselves with the English: the English, for their part, attempted to resuscitate the historical influence of the Jāf Begzādas, allotting to them the principal offices of the state at Ḥalabjah and Penjwin.[185] Other *sādah*, like the influential Shī‘ī ’ *alim* Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr,[186] opposed the English but supported the king.[187] Still others, like Shaikh Maḥmūd, the foremost of Sulaimāniyyah’s Barzinjī Sādah, resisted every authority whenever opportunity offered: he took up arms against the English or the Crown or both in 1919, 1923, and 1930.[188]

The absence of cohesion among the *sādah* reflected itself in their plural and inchoate parties or factions. These came together and broke up on personal grounds, rather than for political principles. The king, who did not desire any strong opposition to crystallize, did his best to keep their discord alive.

The parties contended largely in Parliament. Here too, therefore, the *sādah* pulled different ways. Thus in 1924 nineteen out of the ninety-nine members of the Constituent Assembly were *sādah*, but only five voted for the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, while four were in opposition and one abstained. The others, fearing popular anger,[189] had kept away.[190] Again in 1926, in a

Chamber of eighty-eight deputies, eleven out of seventeen *sādah* approved the extension of the term of the treaty to twenty-five years, five walked out in protest, and one was absent.[191]

It is not difficult to account for the political disunity of the *sādah*. For one thing, it should be remembered that the *sādah* did not constitute one economic class with identical fundamental interests, but a stratum of men from differing income groups, performing, even when belonging to one and the same income group, differing social functions.[192] For another thing, the *sādah*, who were landed and affluent, were themselves divided not only ethnically but also on a sectarian basis, and the Kurds and Shī‘ī Arabs among them were not, on the whole, as closely associated with state power as the Arab Sunnīs, but stood pretty much on their own two feet, and were, therefore, more capable of independent political behavior. More than that, the large landowners, *sādah* and *non-sādah*, were not in an adverse or perilously exposed condition as in the forties and fifties, when a clear and direct threat to their interests from below compelled them to cohere.

Considerations of private or family advantage tended, therefore, to weigh very much in the politics of the day. Adherence to this or that faction was often no more than a bid for its support in obtaining office, or land, or a tax rebate, or other personal gain. This found classic expression in the conduct of the richest and biggest landowning tribal *sādah* of the Euphrates, Muḥsin Abū Ṭabīkh and his brother Ja‘far. Apart from vast estates on Shaṭṭ al-Ḥillah and Shaṭṭ ash-Shāmiyyah, the fortune of the Abū Ṭabīkhs was estimated in 1926 at 50,000 Turkish pounds in gold.[193] Their ambition was to consolidate and expand this fortune. There was no way of doing that in the Shāmiyyah other than getting involved with one or the other of the contending political forces. But there was always the risk of betting on the wrong party. The two brothers, therefore, became political enemies. In 1920 Muḥsin gave strong support to the anti-British Iraqi uprising, Ja‘far made great play of his pro-British sentiments. In 1922 Ja‘far was hot for the British Mandate, Muḥsin as hot against it. In 1926, when Muḥsin fell out with King Faiṣal, Ja‘far became an ardent royalist. In 1930, Muḥsin joined the opposition al-Ikhā’ al-Waṭanī” (“National Brotherhood”) party of Yāsīn al-Hāshimī, Ja‘far the anti-Ikhā’ “Euphrates party” of the king, and later the anti-Ikhā’ group of ‘Alī Jawdat and Jamīl al-Midfa‘ī.[194] Whichever side won, they would have had one foot in the right camp. Muḥsin was a master

of intrigue and a man of many faces. At one point we find him in close confidence with King Faiṣal, at another exposing to the British the king's political activities in Shāmiyyah. What irked him no end was that he had to pay annual taxes amounting to 20,000 rupees. This lay behind his participation, and more often his initiative, in the shaikhly plots of the Shāmiyyah. As administrative officers did not fail to note,[195] these plots frequently coincided with the time of the annual rice assessment. In 1926, for example, Muḥsin was busy sending dispatches to various *sādah* and shaikhs on the Euphrates to win their support for a tribal combination to safeguard the "rights" of tribal leaders and resist "the gross oppression of the rice measurement," and for a theocratic state of the Shī'ī tribes of the Euphrates owing only nominal allegiance to the government of Iraq. But his real object was thought to be "to alarm the government . . . , and to maintain his name and reputation well in the limelight in the hope that he will thus secure preferential treatment in matters regarding land and revenue."[196] Muḥsin was to attain this end in 1935, after a successful insurrection by the shaikhs and *sādah* of Dīwāniyyah had raised Yāsīn al-Hāshimī and his party to power.

The disappearance from the political scene in 1929 of 'Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa'dūn strengthened in time the hand of the king and his adherents. The personalities that had tied their fortunes to those of Sa'dūn-men like Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, whose rise to the premiership in 1929 had been occasioned by Sa'dūn's favor,[197] or Nājī as-Suwaidī, who filled the same office for four brief months in 1929-1930[198] only because he was Sa'dūn's deputy in the leadership of the Progressives[199]–now lost in importance.[200] Their party, in fact, very soon completely disintegrated.

To the power of the king, though not to the esteem in which he was held by the people, added appreciably the signing of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty in 1930 and the withdrawal of the British "Mandate" in 1932. In all internal concerns the influence of Faiṣal became unsurpassed, and nearness or service to him the shortest way of attaining high office. At the same time, the share of the *sādah* in the government palpably declined (see Tables 7-2 and 7-3). However, until 1941, and especially in the troublous eight years that followed Faiṣal's sudden demise–he died on 7 September 1933 of heart failure–they would play conspicuous roles in the life of the country, though

their old spell had been broken and their eminence would rest–as was, by and large, the case already in the second half of the twenties–on grounds other than religion or the holy descent, which they still vaunted. To this bear witness the careers of the two most prominent *sādah*-politicians of the period, Yāsīn al-Hāshimī and Rashīd ʻAlī al-Gailānī.

The patronymic al-Hāshimī, which, of course, denotes that its bearer derives from Banī Hāshim, the clan of the Prophet, was, it would appear, adopted by Yāsīn, whose original name was Yāsīn Ḥilmī, only around 1902, when he entered the Military Academy at Isṭanbūl.[201] His father had held the title of *sayyid*, but some doubt whether he was of Arab descent, and link him to the Turkish Karawiyyah tribe which came to Iraq with Sultan Murād in the seventeenth century.[202]

Anyhow, Yāsīn did not belong, like ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn or the *naqīb* of Baghdād, to the upper ranks of *sādah*. Sayyid Salmān, his father, had been a *mukhtār–a* headman–of one of the quarters of Baghdād, and in Ottoman times it was considered degrading to hold such an appointment.[203] "Everybody knows," ran one of the contemporary sayings, "that in the towns and villages *mukhtārs* are of the lowest class of persons and that notables . . . decline this office."[204]

Yāsīn had not been of the affluent segment of *sādah* either, but acquired tracts of government land free of charge after his access to power. He, indeed, fathered the idea of the desirability of the gratuitous grant of rights of heritable occupancy over virgin state land to royalist politicians so that they would not be, as he contended, dependent for their livelihood upon the state or anyone else, and would thus be freer in their views and conduct, and less apt to cringe and wag their tails before the governing authority.[205] This idea, to which he won King Faiṣal, was to be the object of much abuse, not least by Yāsīn himself, and would be so misapplied as to work largely in favor of moneyed "pump-pashas" and powerful tribal shaikhs.

Though Yāsīn enjoyed initially no advantage of wealth or high status and, unlike other claimants of holy lineage, could command the allegiance of neither tribe nor mystic order, he was the only politician whom Faiṣal feared. For this Faiṣal had good reasons.

Like many other an Iraqi from a middle-income family, Yāsīn had decided for an army career in Ottoman times, and during the First World

War won wide repute as a soldier. In 1917, at the age of thirty-three, he led the Twentieth Turkish Division against the Russians in Galicia with "great success,"[206] attracting the attention of Wilhelm II, emperor of the Germans, who is said to have personally recommended his promotion to major-general.[207] In the spring of the following year he commanded the Ottoman troops at Salt and ʻAmmān where, said the British, "he proved too good a strategist for us."[208]

Through the display of these shining military abilities, Yāsīn won powerful support among Iraqi officers. To this added his work for *Al-' Ahd* (The Covenant), a clandestine organization formed in 1913 by pan-Arab officers of the Ottoman army: Yāsīn had founded and organized its Mosul Branch, propagated its ideas in Isṭanbūl, and in 1915, while chief of staff of the Seventh Turkish Corps, was in secret communication on its behalf with the British, then in the thick of their Dardanelles campaign.[209]

It was perhaps as much his nature as his talents and connections that made Yāsīn dangerous. As viewed by the English in 1920, he was "doctrinaire, dogmatic, efficient, unscrupulous, and extremely ambitious."[210] In 1924, the head of one of Baghdād's old houses, Yūsuf as-Suwaidī, called him a "treacherous" man. To the nationalists, he explained, Yāsīn displayed himself as a patriot, to the British as an Anglophile, and was at the same time "very expertly" deceiving the king.[211] Iraq's popular poet, Maʻrūf ar-Ra"ṣafī", inveighed against him in the thirties:

> In his line of vision lies only his private good,
> It is his guide in all things.[212]

Such criticisms may not have been unaffected by prejudice, but there was much in Yāsīn's conduct to cause Faiṣal to keep a wary eye upon him.

Faiṣal's first experience with Yāsīn had been in 1919, when he was Syria's ruler. To win Yāsīn to his interests, he had appointed him chief of the General Staff of the Arab army; but before that year was over Yāsīn had come under suspicion, it being believed that he was making preparations for a coup against Faiṣal, whose policy toward the French he deemed too mild. He was invited by the British to tea, arrested, and eventually interned in Palestine.[213]

After his enthronement in Iraq, Faiṣal at first hesitated to allow Yāsīn, who had in the meantime been released from custody, to return to Baghdād. He thought that his presence "might be a disturbing element."[214] The real reason, as it turned out afterwards, was that the king's right-hand men, Ja'far al-'Askarī and Nūrī as-Sa'īd, and their immediate following were "considerably alarmed" at the possible effect of Yāsīn's return on their own place in the political scale.[215] In fact, when on 8 May 1922, Faiṣal's objection having been withdrawn, Yāsīn arrived in Baghdād, he was greatly welcomed by "all classes" excepting the king's party, and a general wish was signified for his appointment as minister of defence in the place of Ja'far al-Askarī;[216] but the king, of course, would not consider this, being apprehensive of the "unfavorable influence" he might exert on the army.[217]

Faiṣal was also troubled by Yāsīn's possible aims. He was known to have been clandestinely corresponding from Damascus with Muṣṭafa Kemāl, and in 1923 an Iraqi gazetted officer would report to the head of the British Special Service[218] that he had seen "in the course of his duty [?]" in Syria a letter that Yāsīn addressed to the Turkish leader just before his return to Baghdād, in which he wrote that he had hopes of securing a seat in the Iraqi Cabinet, and that should this become a fact he would always work for the furtherance of Kemāl's policy. Should he be successful in obtaining the post of minister of defence, he is said to have added, this assistance would be of a more active nature.[219] But in this thing the gazetted officer could well have been prompted by Nūrī as-Sa'īd and Ja'far al-'Askarī, anxious, as they were, to deny Yāsīn the portfolio of defence at all costs. On the other hand, in 1922 and 1923, Yāsīn's name was linked with a movement that was afoot and that aimed at a Turkish protectorate for Iraq;[220] and in 1925, when Yāsīn put together a regular opposition and styled it the "People's party," the similarity of the name to that of Muṣṭafa Kemāl's organization did not escape notice.[221]

Yāsīn seemed to be soldierly straightforward, but often the straightforwardness was in his manner only. He had scarcely been few weeks in Iraq when he threw himself into the popular struggle against the treaty and the "Mandate," but some two months later, in August 1922, in the course of a private conversation with the high commissioner, he professed that the terms of the treaty were "liberal beyond any measure that might have been anticipated"[222] and in September told Faiṣal that he–Faiṣal–had been in error in placing emphasis upon the repeal of the "Mandate" or the right of Iraq to conduct its external policy: a free hand in domestic affairs was all that was needed.[223] At about the same time, Yāsīn privately sent the nationalist leader Ja'far Abū-t-Timman[224] assurances that he was "waiting for his orders" and fervently hoped that "the oppressors would be ejected from Iraq."[225] This, being known, ruled him out as minister of interior, a post for which his statements to the king and high commissioner had made him eligible.

In 1924 Yāsīn played the same double role again: he and other politicians agreed secretly to combine together to prevent the ratification of the treaty and, in the event of failure, to excite such discord in the Constituent Assembly as would end in its dissolution;[226] but, in an interview with the high commissioner, he attributed all the "difficulties" that the treaty was meeting in the Assembly to "the incapacity, weakness, and unpopularity" of Ja'far al-'Askarī, the then premier, and of his Cabinet.[227] The agitation inside the Assembly and the popular anger outside attained such an intensity that the Cabinet appeared to be losing its hold upon the situation. In the end, however, the treaty was ratified, but after an ultimatum by the high commissioner in which he threatened that his government might adopt "an alternative method for dealing with Iraq," and demanded from Faiṣal, "as a condition of further support" by Britain, the immediate dispersal of the Assembly.[228]

By this time the High Commissioner had apparently come to the conclusion that Yāsīn was too dangerous out of office and too intractable in a subordinate position[229] and, in conjunction with Faiṣal, decided in August of the same year to place him at the head of the government.[230] By thus elevating Yāsīn, the king and the high commissioner may also have aimed at bringing him into disrepute with the popular opposition and his own supporters.

Yāsīn's administration was effective, but endured merely till June 1925. The only thing for which it was to be remembered was its very unpopular approval of the oil concessions. This, perhaps, was all that the British wanted out of Yāsīn as premier and, not long after the signature of the related agreement, he was eased out of office by the simple device of denying him a majority of deputies in the new Chamber. The king had desired that majority for Ja'far al-'Askarī and Nūrī as-Sa'īd, but 'Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa'dūn, whom the British Residency favored as Yāsīn's successor, was afforded the means to secure the return of candidates of his own choice. His adherents were so indiscreet that they were discussing the composition of the Cabinet under him before the holding of the "elections," and a full six weeks before Yāsīn's resignation.[231]

After some thundering by his new "People's party"[232] in 1925 and ineffectual protests against the extension of the treaty in 1926, Yāsīn again threw in his lot with the government. He had not found it easy to regain the confidence of the popular opposition. However, in 1930, the interests and moods of men being inconstant, he was back in its favor, and soon stood at the head of a powerful front, comprising the National party of Ja'far Abū-t-Timman and his own group, now expanded and renamed the Ikhā' al-Watanī,[233] and directed against the new treaty regulating Iraqi-British relations, signed that year by Nūrī as-Sa'īd. The front led the unprecedented fourteen-day general strike of 1931, which hard times and a feared increase in municipal tax rates had provoked, and which visibly shook the assurance and authority of Nūrī's government.[234]

Before long the king was dangling the fruits of office before the Ikhā' leaders and, by thus drawing them away, broke up the front. Yāsīn had, it is true, declined the premiership, which Faiṣal offered him in 1932 upon condition that he should declare his acceptance of the new treaty.[235] On the other hand, his principal partner in the Ikhā', Rashīd 'Ālī al-Gailānī, took the post of chief of the Royal Dīwān, and in 1933 Yāsīn himself agreed to serve as minister of finance in an Ikhā'-dominated Cabinet led by Rashīd 'Alī, and including Nūrī as-Sa'īd at foreign affairs. After a theatrical threat of abdication by the king, Yāsīn and Rashīd 'Alī also agreed to honor the country's "international obligations."[236] Moreover, in a tête-à-tête with F. Humphrys, the British ambassador, Yāsīn made, in the words of Humphrys,

a “spontaneous avowal of his intention to consult me privately if things go wrong.”[237]

Faiṣal does not appear to have ever conquered his mistrust of Yāsīn. At least, as late as 1931 he still suspected that Yāsīn aimed at a republic.[238] Yāsīn had, it would seem, given voice in 1926 to the view that a republic “would be the most suitable form of government for Iraq.”[239] More than that, in 1930 the opposition was full of the heated interview which he, Rashīd ʻĀlī, and Nājī as-Suwaidī had had with the king and in which, as was said, they accused Faiṣal of having done the country a “disservice” by concluding the new treaty, and threatened to bring about the downfall of Nūrī’s Cabinet and “if it is necessary of the monarchy too.”[240] But this threat may have been, as far as the throne was concerned, no more than the product of sudden passion. Anyhow, if at heart Yāsīn aspired at a republic, he could not have hoped for such an eventuality while Faiṣal lived. Faiṣal had grown in power and consequence, and was too able a king and more than a match for Yāsīn.

With the death of Faiṣal in 1933, Yāsīn’s chances increased, but he made no move against the throne. Perhaps he did not have enough time. It is doubtful, however, whether an action of this kind, if it had ever been his aim, could have, in the new circumstances, served any useful purpose from the point of view of his own interests. By 1935 he had, in any case, become the most influential man in the state. Several factors had been working in his favor.

In the first place, Ghāzī, who succeeded Faiṣal, had little experience and no political understanding, so that the authority previously possessed by the Palace rapidly declined.

In the second place, with the end of the “Mandate” in 1932, the English had ceased their pulling of strings, or at least kept now to a minimum their interference in the internal affairs of the country. Yāsīn, on his side, made sure to neutralize them: in January 1935, two months before ascending to the premiership by means of a tribal rebellion–the Ikhā’-dominated government of 1933 had given way to a succession of short-lived Cabinets headed by ex-Sharīfian officers[241]–Yāsīn had a private talk with the British ambassador, and plainly told him that he had made up his mind to abandon his opposition to the 1930 Treaty because he had “become convinced that Iraq could not survive without an alliance with Great Britain and that this

alliance was under the Treaty offered on fair terms."[242] When he took office in the following March, he again assured the ambassador that he would "find the new Yāsīn very different from the old."[243]

In the third place, the politicians in the field, excepting Nūrī as-Sa'īd, were far inferior to Yāsīn in ability, levelheadedness, or willpower, and Nūrī himself privately admitted in 1935 that Yāsīn was "the only man in Iraq who was fit to be Prime Minister."[244]

Perhaps half of the secret of Yāsīn's strength lay in the hold he had over vital departments in the state. He controlled the police force through its director, who was wholly in his power.[245] His brother, Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, had authority over appointments in the sensitive educational field.[246] Ṭaha, who filled at the same time the office of chief of General Staff, was also the medium by which Yāsīn built himself a position in the army, and in particular among the pan-Arab segment of the officer corps. Ṭaha had had this post since 1929 as part of a political arrangement[247] which was meant, it would appear, to counterweigh the authority that Ja'far al-'Askarī and Nūrī as-Sa'īd possessed in the army. This was but another manifestation of the policy of balance so characteristic of the period of the "Mandate."

Because Ja'far and Nūrī were the only ex-Sharīfian officers of whose influence he had apprehensions, Yāsīn did not fail to associate them with the government that he formed in March 1935, giving to Ja'far the portfolio of defence and to Nūrī that of foreign affairs. In September of the same year, however, anxious, as he was, to strengthen his position and weaken theirs, and deeming the moment favorable, he initiated a scheme that would have placed the Office of Adjutant-General directly under the chief of staff rather than under the minister of defence, as heretofore, and would thus have given him and his brother Ṭaha undivided say over army appointments. But Ja'far at once threatened to resign, and the scheme fell through.[248] Later, urging the king's displeasure with Ja'far–the latter had apparently been criticizing Ghāzī's private life–Yāsīn tried to rid himself of Ja'far altogether by designating him for the ambassadorship at London, but Nūrī as-Sa'īd frowned the idea away.[249]

It should be clear from these incidents that Yāsīn, though overshadowing everyone else, was not all-powerful. The incidents throw also into relief the rivalry that was consuming the Cabinet and at the same time weakening the army or, more accurately–Nūrī, Ja'far, and Yāsīn being avowedly of the

same pan-Arab persuasion–the pan-Arab trend within the army; a rivalry which on October 29, 1936, afforded a coterie from the opposing particularist trend, made up predominantly of Kurdish officers and led by General Bakr Ṣidqi, commander of the First Division, the opportunity to pull a military coup, hit both factions, bring down Yāsīn, and gain, for a time, all real power.

Other factors, besides the one just mentioned, contributed to Yāsīn's downfall. For one thing, his coming to power by means of a refractory tribal combination so impaired the prestige of the government as to encourage rival tribal groupings to further revolts which, being stamped out with a heavy hand, increased the discontent, allowing Yāsīn little repose in the twenty months of his ascendancy. The growth of Yāsīn's power, his new emphasis upon his status as a *sayyid*,[250] his obvious effort to curry favor with religious opinion,[251] his indiscreet expression, in a speech at Baṣrah on September 7, 1936, of the hope that he would be "spared for another ten years" to consecrate himself to "the welfare of Iraq"[252]–these and other signs excited the suspicion that he was merely watching for an occasion to take the whole sovereignty upon himself. Ḥikmat Sulaimān, an ex-Ikhā' leader who, to his bitter resentment, had not been given by Yāsīn the portfolio of interior to which, he felt, he was entitled, and who was already hand-in-glove with Bakr Ṣidqī,[253] was now heard to comment that henceforward, insofar as Yāsīn was concerned, the *mot d'ordre* would, he presumed, be altered from "Vive le Roi!" to "Vive le moi!" But, in the eyes of the British embassy, such criticism did not appear at the time to have any factual basis.[254] Far more damaging to Yāsīn was his appropriation of state land by "dubious means":[255] his successor, Hikmat Sulaimān, alleged in a conversation with the British ambassador that Yāsīn had thus acquired over 60,000 dūnums.[256] Nor did it help Yāsīn that King Ghāzī, who was "very 'thick' with the army,"[257] should have nursed a grudge against him: Ghāzī smarted under the restraints that Yāsīn had imposed on his personal life in the wake of the elopement in June 1936 of his sister, Princess 'Azzah, with a Rhodean hotel servant and her renunciation of Islam.[258] Yāsīn would to the end believe that Ghāzī was privy to the coup in principle:[259] Bakr Ṣidqī had himself told Yāsīn on the day of his march on Baghdād that he had Ghāzī's approval.[260] Finally, through Ḥikmat Sulaimān, another element, which had been putting forward claims on behalf of the unprivileged, and

which clustered around *Al-Ahālī* newspaper, linked hands with Bakr Ṣidqī and helped ideologically in the discomfiture of Yāsīn's regime.

Yāsīn did not long outlive his fall from power: he died in exile in Lebanon on 21 January 1937.

The last of the important *sādah*-politicians, Rashīd ʻĀlī al-Gailānī, was, by comparison with Yāsīn al-Hāshimī, a political figure of the second rank. Much of his importance derives from his connection with the 1941 movement that bears his name.

This movement was essentially an initiative of the military and pan-Arab-inclined component of the Sunnī middle class. Its real leaders were Colonels Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, Kāmil Shabīb, Maḥmūd Salmān, and Fahmī Saʻīd, commanders, respectively, of the Third Division, the First Division, the air force, and the mechanized troops; all of whom came from families of middling income and status or more modest condition. Identified for short as the Four Colonels, they had had a hand in organizing the destruction on 11 August 1937 of Bakr Ṣidqī, and restoring the Arab element to dominance within the army, and from the end of 1938 had been the chief factor in the politics of the country. Bent, by reason of the collapse of France, upon a watch-and-wait attitude toward the World War, and unwilling to countenance England's interference in Iraq's affairs, the Four Colonels flew now in the face of the pro-British ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh, and, after his escape from the country, divested him of the regency, which he had assumed in 1939 upon Ghāzī's death. In the end, however, their movement crumbled beneath British blows.

At no point in 1941 did Rashīd ʻĀlī rise to a decisive political role.[261] The Four Colonels had the higher hand from first to last. But the interesting thing is that Rashīd ʻĀlī was one of very few representatives of old families to cast in their lot with the movement. This fact needs to be explained.

Rashīd ʻĀlī was in no way a revolutionary, and often did what was momentarily expedient; but he was restless, impulsive, and readier than other royalist politicians to take risks and embark upon venturous policies. This is probably why in the circles to which British Ambassador M. Peterson had access Rashīd ʻĀlī passed politically for a "wild man."[262] Ex-Premier Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, also an adversary, looked on him as a "déséquilibré."[263] But from the standpoint of Colonel Ṣabbāgh, the most

influential figure in the 1941 movement, he was a man of “daring and courage.”[264]

Rashīd ‘Ālī grew up under social circumstances very different from those of most of the *sādah*-politicians. He had been born to a *mudarris*–religious teacher–in 1892 “in the fields of Ba‘qūbah.”[265] His father, Sayyid ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb, was a relative of the *naqīb* of Baghdād, and had married the *naqīb*’s half-sister, but, having had no children from her, he took to himself a second wife. Careless of the *naqīb*’s sensibilities, he made his choice out of affection, wedding the daughter of a *sirkāl*–an agricultural agent and inferior chief–from the tribe of al-Bayāt. Doubly offended, the *naqīb* ostracized ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb and deprived him of the allowances from the Qādiriyyah *awqāf* to which he was entitled.[266] As ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb had no ample means of his own, the years that followed were for him and his family years of discomfort and privation.

But if a wide gulf was to separate the world in which Rashīd ‘Ālī developed to manhood and the world in which the *naqīb* and the privileged members of his clan lived, in the end it was Rashīd ‘Ālī who was the more fortunate, for the easy and rich world of the *naqīb* was also an archaic and deadening world. The sons of the *naqīb* attained to old age without ever having committed themselves to an opinion or an initiative. By contrast, Rashīd ‘Ālī stood out for his industry, enterprise, and self-reliance. He showed also little taste for the old learning and did not go for the religious profession but, leaving the beaten family track, joined in 1908 the newly established Baghdād School of Law. Eventually, in 1921, in his twenty-ninth year, he qualified himself for a judgeship in the Court of Appeal, where his good work won him praise from his British advisers[267] and, three years later, the portfolio of justice. But, of course, the Gailānī name was also a factor in his swift rise to ministerial eminence.

From this point, the life of Rashīd ‘Ālī begins to bear the imprint of the politics of the day, and in a number of respects becomes very much like that of the common run of royalist politicians.

For one thing, from power followed wealth for Rashīd ‘Ālī within a decade or so. Like others of his associates in office, he came into possession of wide tracts of good land by apparently “abusing the land settlement machinery.”[268] Over and above this, he took advantage in 1936 of his position as minister of interior and justice to “extort rents and other dues”

from the tenants of the Qādiriyyah properties[269]–the properties forming the endowments of the Qādiriyyah shrine and mosque–of which he had that same year assumed the trusteeship, after dividing this function from that of *naqīb*,[270] an arrangement without precedent, and which was commonly viewed as "something of a scandal" and ultimately canceled.[271]

For another thing, Rashīd ʻĀlī made sharp zigzags; and zigzagging, as should be evident by now, had become an inherent feature of royalist politics which increasingly revolved around persons, even when seemingly revolving around issues. Initially, in 1924, Rashīd ʻĀlī tried to build up his political position by following the lead of Yāsīn al-Hāshimī,[272] and in March 1925, at his instigation, opposed the signing of the oil concession, resigning as minister of justice in protest;[273] but three months later he drew away from Yāsīn, joined the Progressive party, withdrew his opposition to the concession "in the face of the *fait accompli*," and became minister of interior under ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn,[274] an office which he vacated in mid-July, having risen, with the support of Saʻdūn and the Progressives, to the speakership of the Chamber of Deputies. In 1926, however, by the aid of Ṣafwat al-ʻAwwah, the chief of the Royal Privy Purse, he won a place of special favor with King Faiṣal,[275] who now used him to divide the Progressives and ease Saʻdūn out of power: Rashīd ʻĀlī, having, for a trifling incident, resigned the speakership with a bang, ran for reelection at a subsequent session of the Chamber, defeating Saʻdūn's nominee with the help of the king who, it would appear, assured his victory by bringing together temporarily the opposition, the small personal following of Rashīd ʻĀlī, and the unattached members of the Chamber, and by inducing some of Saʻdūn's Progressives to play their party false.[276] When, as had been anticipated, Saʻdūn relinquished the reins of government, Rashīd ʻĀlī reassumed the post of minister of interior, this time under Jaʻfar al-ʻAskarī. But toward the end of 1927, retreating from a difficult situation created by an unsatisfactory new treaty with England, he turned his back on Jaʻfar, too,[277] and soon after went into opposition. From 1930 and for the next six years he hitched his fortunes to those of Yāsīn al-Hāshimī, both now concordantly trimming their sails to the popular wind or, at the bidding of factional advantage, making the needed compromises and reversals.

It was after 1933, when the country, having been deprived of Faiṣal's restraining influence, became a prey to discord and disturbance, that the

venturous streak in Rashīd ‘Ālī came to the fore. This, together with his extreme love of office–he once burst into tears because his friends had omitted him from their Cabinet[278]–pushed him in 1935, when out of power, to seek novel and more expeditious means of regaining the helm of the state. With the encouragement of Yāsīn, he worked up an agitation among the tribal shaikhs of the Middle Euphrates, and through them succeeded in overthrowing two rival Cabinets in quick succession, and obtaining the government for Yāsīn and himself. After his own and Yāsīn’s downfall in 1936 and the annihilation of Bakr Ṣidqī in 1937, he shifted his attention from the tribes to the army. At first he cultivated the loyalty of a military faction led by General Ḥusain Fawzī, the chief of staff,[279] but when in 1940 it turned out that this faction counted for very little, Rashīd ‘Ālī glided into the good graces of the Four Colonels. The very same policies by which he won support from them for his premiership in that year–his neutral attitude with regard to the World War, his strictly literal interpretation of the privileges enjoyed by Britain under the 1930 Treaty, and his maintenance of clandestine contacts with the Axis powers–provoked a demand from the British government for his dismissal, which in turn drove him closer into the arms of the Four Colonels, and was in all probability a factor in his espousal of their coup of 1941.[280] But this espousal is also in a way explicable in terms of the aspects of his character and past history already brought out.

From almost every previous move he made in the game of power, Rashīd ‘Ālī came out a winner but, by committing himself now to the Four Colonels’ coup, he committed himself to a lost cause, at least in the short run. His career in Iraq was brought abruptly to an end, and his property forfeited to the state. He would not reappear on Baghdād’s political stage until after the 1958 Revolution, and then in a brief and ineffectual role.

As already indicated, Rashīd ‘Ālī was one of very few *sādah* or members of old or established families to make common cause with the 1941 movement. These very few included, however, two ex-premiers, Nājī as-Suwaidī and Nājī Shawkat.[281] Moreover, with rare exceptions, the rest sat watchfully on the fence.

By contrast, the more prominent of the ex-Sharīfian officers sided unambiguously with British power and Regent ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh. This assured

their triumph in their long-standing rivalry with the old families, and eventually made possible the rise of one of them, Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, to a position of influence equaled only by that of the regent, with whom he would, from the end of “the Second British Occupation” in 1946 onward, share, if uneasily, ultimate mastery over the machine of the state.

In consequence, the role of the *sādah* in the government decreased sharply after 1941. Their share of the appointments to the premiership, which under the “Mandate” had reached as high as 69.2 percent, and between 1936 and 1941 had been 37.5 percent, fell as low as 10 percent in the last decade of the monarchy. Their portion of all other ministerial appointments dropped from 31 to 20 percent, and further to 6.4 percent in the same periods (consult Tables 7-2 and 7-3).

But there were other, deeper, causes for this decline in the governmental weight of the *sādah*. Their whole social position had been on the downgrade. The traditional ideas so basic to their interests had lost much of their hold upon the mind of the people. The building up of the state apparatus, the growth of the army (temporarily checked in the forties), the spread of modern learning, the rise of the oil industry, the rapid increase in the country’s revenue, the widening links of Iraq with the outside world, had created new forces, new opinions, a new psychological climate. The old activities of many of the *sādah* families, their functions as *‘ulamā’*, or keepers of shrines, or leaders of mystic orders, had declined in social value. Less and less significance had come to be attached to the claim of descent from the Prophet. The term *sayyid* itself had lost its exclusive meaning, and now applied to an ever broadening circle of people, becoming the equivalent of the English “mister.” In short, birth had ceased to be a determinant of a person’s worth. The relationships between Iraqis were more and more governed by money. These processes were, however, more characteristic of the main cities than of the rural or tribal areas. It is not without significance in this connection that in 1958, out of the six biggest landed *sādah* families, that is, *sādah* families owning more than 100,000 dūnums, five came, as could be gathered from Table 5-3, from the ranks of rural or tribal *sādah*, the sixth being the royal family. But this does not necessarily mean that the urban *sādah*, on the whole, had, from a pecuniary point of view, been sinking down. There is no way of telling how they in fact fared economically, as no statistics are available with regard to the

distribution of forms of wealth other than land; nor can a decline in their economic state be inferred from the decline of their political power, because in Iraq under the monarchy, for reasons that will be given in another chapter,[282] there was no close correlation between the distribution of power and the distribution of wealth, at least insofar as the social classes and strata were concerned. On the other hand, it is beyond question that not a few of the urban *sādah* had been able to adapt themselves to the new facts and the new chances, and had, if anything, become wealthier; or at least their wealth had become more conspicuous, and on that account a source not so much of strength as of potential danger to themselves in view of the wide diffusion of ideas antagonistic to opulence among the common people. By such ideas even the countryside had begun to be affected. In many a district, the veneration that peasant-tribesmen were wont to feel for the landed tribal *sayyid* had, by the closing decade of the monarchy, almost vanished. In their eyes, he had come to look less and less like a *sayyid* and more and more like an economic parasite. This is why, after the July 14 Revolution, his position in various areas collapsed so easily and so suddenly.

8

THE OLD “ARISTOCRACY” OF OFFICIALS

One of the clearly identifiable components of the landed class in the period of the monarchy was the stratum of prominent families from which had been drawn the upper walks of the bureaucracy or of municipal government in Ottoman Iraq. They had filled, at least in the half century before the coming of the English, the high places below the rank of *wālī*,[1] such as the posts of *mutaşarrif*,[2] or *qāim-maqām*,[3] or mayor, and, occasionally, more elevated positions in the central administration at Isṭanbūl.

In contrast to the landed *sādah*, who were established among townsmen or tribesmen, and the landed shaikhs or aghas, who formed the chief figures in the countryside, these administrative families had their roots exclusively in the cities. Moreover, before the English conquest, their lands were, as a rule, situated within reach of the larger towns. Some of them, it is true, succeeded in obtaining from the Ottoman government title deeds conferring on them proprietary rights deep in the tribal domain but, in the too frequent periods of collapse of Ottoman authority, they had much difficulty in asserting their claims or collecting their rents.

Save for the few *sadah* who became connected with the bureaucracy–men like ‘Āref Ḥikmat al-Alūsī, who served as *mutaṣarrif* of Fezzān, Libya, and was the brother-in-law of the Turkish *wālī* of Baghdād, Nāmiq Pasha (1898-1902)[4]–the position of this class of families had no religious significance. The only other exception to this were the ‘Umarīs of Mosul, who provided a chief treasurer or *daftardār* at Baghdād in the days of the Mamlūk Pasha Sulaimān Abū Laylah (1749–1762), a *wālī* or governor of Mosul in 1831, a *kātib-ul-‘Arabiyyah* or secretary for Arab affairs in the eighteen-sixties, a chief of staff of the Ottoman army in 1912, and two premiers under the monarchy;[5] and to whom some sanctity was attached on account of their claim of descent from Caliph ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb: one of

the ancestors of the family, Qāsim al-‘Umarī, migrated to Mosul in the sixteenth century so that, as was said, he might, by virtue of his saintliness, “preserve the place from the earthquakes and other natural calamities that were afflicting it.’[6]

If, in the formation of the old “aristocracy” of officials, religion was of little account, an ethnic factor was, on the other hand, unambiguously at play. Unlike the landed *sādah*, who were Arabs or Kurds or Persians, many of the landed bureaucrats or bureaucrat- *mallāks* of whom we are now speaking were by origin members of the old governing race. In other words, they were Turks, but Turks who had long been resident in Iraq. Thus, the Bāzirgāns, descendants of Bāzirgān Pasha, *wālī* of Baghdād from 1690 to 1693,[7] and the Mumayyiz, descendants of Ḥasan Pasha, *wālī* of Baghdād from 1704 to 1723,[8] were of Turkish blood. So were also the Awchīs, who for many decades were virtually the hereditary *mutaṣarrifs* of Kirkūk; the Chādirchīs, who gave Ottoman Baghdād two of its mayors; and the Churbachīs who, as their name indicates, were originally connected with the provisioning of the Ottoman troops. The forebears of these three families had all arrived in Iraq in the army of Sultan Murād IV in 1638, and had been recompensed with grants of land for their services in the campaign.[9] Other Turkish administrative families of consequence were the Daftarīs, who descended from a *daftardār* or treasurer of ‘Alī Riḍā Pasha al-Lāz (1831-1842);[10] the Ur-falīs, whose ancestor was an agha or chief of the Janissaries[11] in the days of Dāūd Pasha (1817-1831);[12] and the Naphṭajīs, who for long held the post of *mutaṣallim* or deputy governor at Kirkūk[13] and exercised exclusive control over the naphta springs of this district, charging three shillings to four shillings six pence for every skinful carried off,[14] and realizing in the twenties about 3,000 pounds sterling annually.[15]

Another component of the old class of bureaucrat-*mallāks* was of Caucasian provenance and embraced non-Mamlūk families as well as families that descended directly from the Mamlūks. Among the latter were the Shawkats and the Sulaimāns. The founder of the house of Shawkat, which stood out in the politics of the monarchic period, was Aḥmad Agha, a Circassian and, under the Mamlūks, a commander of the Janissaries at Baghdād.[16] The founder of the Sulaimān family, Ṭāleb Agha, was a slave of Sulaimān Pasha the Great (1780–1812). He had been kidnapped from

Georgia in his boyhood, and grew up with Dāūd, the last of the Mamlūks, who, on becoming pasha of Baghdād in 1817, appointed him as his *kahyah* or chief minister.[17] General Maḥmūd Shawkat, who played a conspicuous role in the overthrow of Sultan ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd in 1909, and his half-brother, Ḥikmat Sulaimān, who served as premier of Iraq in 1936–1937, belonged to this family.

The most noted non-Mamlūk Caucasian house was that of the Dāghestānīs, who traced their lineage to the old absolute rulers of Dāghestān, which is presently an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. One of them, Marshal Muḥammad Fāḍil Pasha, a trainee of St. Petersburg Military Academy, an ex-commandant of the Sultan’s Guard, and an expellee from Isṭanbūl falsely accused of an abortive plot against ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd II, was, in the closing decades of the Ottoman period, the leading dignitary of the Maydān district of Baghdād, and from time to time acted as *wālī* or commander of Ottoman troops.[18] His son, Ghāzī, held rank in the fifties as deputy chief of staff and then as officer commanding the Third Armored Division. Less conspicuous were the Fārsīs, who sprang from Muḥammad Partaw, a Tatar refugee who rose in the eighteen-thirties to the position of *Kātib al-Fārsī* or the pasha’s secretary for Persian affairs.[19]

There were two other constituents to the old class of bureaucrat-*mallāks:* the descendants of the ruling houses of the *de facto* autonomous principalities of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, namely, the Bābāns and the Jalīlīs; and the descendants of tribal shaikhly families that in the previous one hundred and fifty years or so had taken up residence at Baghdād, such as the Shāwīs and the Rubai‘īs. The Shāwīs, one of whom, Naḍhīf, was assistant chief of staff in 1937–1938 and a minister of defence in 1941, were chiefs of the Arab tribe of ‘Ubaid.[20] The Rubai‘īs, to whom belonged Staff Major General Najīb Ar-Rubai‘ī, the president of the Sovereignty Council from 1958 to 1963, traced to a shaikh of the Arab tribe of Rabī‘ah.[21] The Kurdish Bābāns had also been tribal lords and for several generations hereditary rulers over an extensive realm centering at Sulaimāniyyah, a position that they owed to exploits undertaken in the latter part of the seventeenth century by an ancestor of theirs who, having assisted the sultan in a war against Persia, secured as a reward, according to one of the Bābān pashas, an investiture of “all the land he could conquer.”[22] This, of course, is open to question, it being unlikely that the Ottoman sovereign

would have wished any of his subjects to dominate vast extents of country and thereby become uncontrollable. At any rate, the Bābāns grew so powerful that the Turks were at pains to scatter them, and put an end to their rule in 1850.[23] Subsequently, however, they succeeded in absorbing them into the bureaucratic apparatus of the Ottoman state. Not dissimilar was the history of the Arab Jalīlīs. Their ancestor, ‘Abd-ul-Jalīl, a Christian turned Moslem, was merely an employee in the household of a pasha of Mosul; but one of his sons, Isma‘īl, built for himself such a base of support as to rise in 1726 to the governorship of the province. A successful defence of the city against Nādir Shah of Persia in 1732 by another JalīIī, Ḥusain Pasha, brought the family the fief of Karakosh, and enabled it to gain eventually enough leverage with the populace, the notables, and the local Janissaries as to compel the assent of the sultan to the nomination of Jalīlīs to the dignity of pasha at Mosul almost continuously for the next hundred years. Their power was broken only in 1834. After a period in which they concerned themselves solely with their property, they were, like the Bābāns, assimilated into Ottoman officialdom.[24]

The old “aristocracy” of officials stood at or close to the apex socially. Indeed, the descendants of the old ruling houses–the Bābāns, Jalīlīs, and Dāghestānīs–were highly conscious of their past, and yielded to no family as regards status. At the height of their power, the Bābāns made only consanguine marriages, and were thus all doubly related.[25] As late as the first decade of this century, the “Pashas’ Branch” of the Jalīlīs still showed a disinclination toward connubial ties with strangers. But they married, at least in the late Ottoman period and in monarchic days, into families of *sādah*. So did the Dāghestānīs: Tamārah, a daughter of Ghāzī, was given over in matrimony to a Sa‘dūn and, more recently, Taymūr, Ghāzī’s son, took to wife Basmah, a sister of King Ḥusain of Jordan.[26] Similarly, the Bābāns formed marital alliances with the Jamīls.[27]

Other administrative families also intermarried with families of *sādah*–for example, the Shāwīs with the Ḥaidarīs and the Sulaimāns with the Gailānīs. But the more recurrent pattern, prior to the First World War, was for these families to marry within their own component of the bureaucratic class, that is, Mamlūks with Mamlūks–for example, the Shawkats with the

Sulaimāns–and descendants of Turks with descendants of Turks–for example, the Daftarīs with the Chādirchīs.[28]

The old bureaucrat-*mallāks'* consciousness of their social position was not manifested merely in their attachment to *kafā'ah* or suitability in marriage–a principle, which, as noted elsewhere,[29] is also enjoined by religion. As a rule, in the schools of Ottoman times their children, like the children of the *sādah* and the rest of the *ḍawāt* or notables, received exceptional treatment, special rooms being set aside for their use, in which they relaxed or had their meals, and from which pupils of humbler classes were excluded.[30] No less significant was the practice followed by the mayor of Ottoman Baghdād during the month of Ramaḍān. He invited members of different classes on different nights to break the fast with him. One night he reserved to the *sādah, 'ulamā'*, and higher officials, a second night to the merchants, and the last night to the artisans and others.[31] In an incidental but revealing passage, written in 1805, a historian and a member of an aristocratic administrative-religious family, a 'Umarī of Mosul, observed that in his account of Baghdād he had dealt only with the viziers, the *'ulamā'*, the princes, and the poets "because the others are merchants and artisans and, therefore, not worth mentioning."[32] But it must be remembered that, in their view of other classes, the men of upper condition at Mosul were, on the whole, less open and less liberal than those at Baghdād.

In Ottoman times the administrative families and officials generally were not, as a rule, regarded with favor or affection. This is because they tended to be more a source of injury than of benefit to the men of the people. In the Mamlūk and pre-Mamlūk periods, to be in a government post was often tantamount to being in business for oneself. Appointments were frequently obtained by purchase, the successful bidders recouping themselves with interest in the course of their tenure in office. Such a thing as a sense of public responsibility was probably hard to find, and possibly incomprehensible. The common practice under the Mamlūks of throwing on the officials of the preceding pasha a disproportionately large part of the tax burden was scarcely calculated to cultivate any regard for the good of the state. "Every man that is employed," we read in an account dating from 1817, "makes the most he can of his appointment and secures his utmost

beforehand from the wreck he feels conscious he still floats on even in the full tide of his prosperity."[33]

Things do not appear to have substantially improved after the overthrow of the Mamlūks in 1831 or the pursuit of the reforms known as the Tanẓhīmāt (1839-1876). "The munificence and luxury that officials display in our time," wrote a Baghdādī historian in 1860, "could only be due to one of two things: either they made improper use of public funds or amassed these riches through corruption or by constraining the people, in violation of their rights, to work without pay and lining their own pockets."[34] In 1870, in the public granaries of one of the provincial headquarters, there were two measures, one smaller and one larger than the ordinary market measure, the smaller being used to deal out and sell corn, the larger to buy it or take it in, the first making a difference of 10 percent to the buyer and the second of 16 percent to the seller or tithe-payer. "This," concluded a contemporary vice-consul, "makes in all a twenty-six percentage fraudulently appropriated by the governor and others."[35] Even the reforming Miḍhat Pasha could not stamp out these and other practices, his own undersecretary selling in 1871 the post of *mutaṣarrif* of Mosul for the sum of 800 Turkish pounds.[36]

The system of *maḥsūbiyyah* or patronage added to the disesteem in which the administrative class was held: in the time of the Mamlūks and down to the first decade of this century, at least some of the high officials had in subordinate positions their own *maḥsūbs*–dependents or protégés–to whom sooner or later extended, as could be imagined, any contrecoup that affected their patrons.[37]

Corruption was perhaps grossest under the regime of Sultan 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, that is, roughly from 1878 to the 1908 Revolution, a "period of abuses, discord, negligence, and officialism," in the words of an informed but unsympathizing witness, Ḥaqqī Bey Bābān, a deputy for Baghdād. However, in the public mind the image of the local administrative families may have whitened by contrast with the noticeable decline in the quality of personnel now coming from Isṭanbūl and other places of the empire. To Iraq, in which service was unpopular because of the farness of the country, the intractability of its people, and the severity of its climate, were sent "all the ignorant, incompetent, and bad-mannered functionaries." Not infrequently their only motive was the making of money, which they amassed by means of "exactions." "From the biggest to the pettiest," wrote

Haqqī Bey Bābān in 1910, not without a shade of overcoloring, “they formed a band of thieves. By dint of exploiting the cow that was providing them with milk, they had emaciated it and vowed it to death. The government found itself dishonored and stripped of all prestige.”[38]

From the foregoing observations, it should not necessarily be inferred that there has been since a radical transmutation in the nature of public officials; or that all the advantageously placed government servants misused the positions with which they were entrusted, or increased their substance at the expense of the people; or that the wealthy administrative families became wealthy merely as a consequence of their access to the means of administration. Nor does it follow from the unpopularity or bad reputation of officials that office holding did not continue, from the viewpoint of a part of the population, to rank high as a status symbol.

Although from the beginning of the trend toward centralized Ottoman rule onwards, that is, from 1831 down to 1917, the dignity of *wālī* was, as a rule, withheld from the members of the local administrative families, the latter had in effect a more continuous influence on affairs than the Ottoman chief official. One of the reasons for this was their greater acquaintance with local conditions and practices and their closer ties with local social forces. Another reason was the series of checks placed on the power of the *wālī* by Isṭanbūl, particularly after the middle of the nineteenth century. The *wālī*, for example, had no authority to choose his own subordinates, and exercised no control whatever over nearly half of the bureaucratic apparatus, that is, over the departments whose local chiefs received their instructions from Isṭanbūl, such as the Departments of Justice, Land Records, Posts and Telegraphs, Customs, Public Instruction, and Awqāf or Religious Endowments. He also could not interfere with Dā’irat-is-Saniyyah, that is, the Department of Crown Estates, which had charge of vast tracts of land, including no less than one-third of the whole cultivated area of the Wilāyah of Baghdād, and was administered by the sultan himself through his private personnel.[39] More than that, the *wālī* enjoyed no direct or conclusive say as regards the disposition or tasks of the regular troops or of the *ḍabṭiyyah* or gendarmerie,[40] the troops being answerable to their own commanding officer and the *ḍabṭiyyah* to a special section of the Ottoman War Office.[41] A further reason for the more durable influence of the local

administrative families was the *wālī's* short tenure in office. Thus, on the average, in the period 1831–1917, the Wilāyah of Baghdād experienced a change of governor every two years. As is clear from Table 8-1, an analogous state of things prevailed in the seventeenth century. By contrast, the average term of a Mamlūk pasha was eight and a half years. On the other hand, out of the nine Mamlūk rulers, only two died naturally in office, while six were killed or executed, and one was deposed after a siege of Baghdād by Ottoman troops (consult Table 8-2). These discontinuities and violences, so suggestive of Iraq of the twentieth century, could be explained partly by the sultan's deep mistrust of the *wālīs* and pashas, and partly by the inability of most of these officers to build for themselves a broad and firm underpinning of support. They also stemmed, it goes without saying, from the multiplicity and refractoriness of Iraq's tribes and ethnic and religious groups. All this, if in certain respects harmful to every element of the population, redounded, from the standpoint of relative distribution of influence, to the advantage of the established local social forces, including the native administrative families, even though individual members of these families, and occasionally whole families, suffered from too close an association with *wālīs* or pashas that had fallen from grace or had been pulled down or done to death.

TABLE 8-1

The Tenure in Office of the Wālīs *of Baghdād in the Period 1638–1917*[a]

Period	*Identity of* wālīs	*No. of* wālīs	*Average term of* wālī
1638-1704	Ottoman	38	1 year 8 months
1704-1749	Ḥasan Pasha and son[b]	2	22 years 6 months
1749-1775	Mamlūk	3	8 years 7 months
1776-1780	Ottoman	4	1 year
1780-1831	Mamlūk	6	8 years 6 months
1831-1917[c]	Ottoman	38	2 years 3 months

[a]From the recovery of Baghdād from the hands of the Ṣafawīs by Sultan Murād to its occupation by the English.

[b]Ḥasan Pasha and his son Aḥmad Pasha were Ottomans but achieved a comparative autonomy.

[c]This is the period of the tendency toward centralized rule.

Source: Based on Ibn Sanad, *Matāli'-us-Su'ūd*, p. 178; Chīna, *La Province de Bagdad*, pp. 40–45 and 48–83; and Longrigg, *Iraq*, 1900 to 1950, p. 50.

TABLE 8-2

Pashas of Baghdād in the Mamlūk Period and Their Fate

Name of pasha	*Relationship to preceding pasha or former position*	*Tenure in office*	*Fate*
Sulaimān Abū Laylah	Slave of Ḥasan Pasha (1704-1723)	1749-1762	Died naturally
ʻAlī al-Irānī	Foster son of Aḥmad Pasha bin Ḥasan Pasha (1723-1747)	1762-1764	Imprisoned and executed
ʻUmar Pasha	Slave of Aḥmad Pasha	1764-1775	Dismissed and killed
Muṣṭafa Pasha*	Ex-*wālī* of Ar-Raqqah	1776	Dismissed and killed
ʻAbdī Pasha*	Ex-*wālī* of Kutāhiyyah	1776	Dismissed
ʻAbdullah aṭ-Ṭawīl*	Ex-*walī* of Diyār Bakr	1776-1778	Died naturally
Ḥasan Pasha*	Ex-*wālī* of Kirkūk	1778-1780	Baghdādis rose against him
Sulaimān the Great	Slave; ex-*mutasallim* or deputy governor of Baṣrah	1780-1802	Died naturally
ʻAlī Pasha	Son-in-law of Sulaimān the Great	1802-1806	Assassinated
Sulaimān Pasha	*Kahyah* or chief minister and nephew of ʻAlī Pasha	1806-1810	Dismissed and killed in the desert
ʻAbdullah Pasha	Slave of Sulaimān the Great	1810-1813	Killed by Muntafiq tribesmen
Saʻīd Pasha	Son of Sulaimān the Great	1814-1816	Dismissed and Killed
Dāūd Pasha	Slave of Sulaimān the Great	1816-1831	Deposed after a siege of Baghdād by Ottoman troops

*Non-Mamlūk.

Source: Ibn Sanad, *Maṭāliʻ-us-Suʻūd*, p. 178.

The coming of the English produced a detrimental and sudden change in the affairs of the old bureaucrat-*mallāks*. For those, who were in positions of command, it was not easy to adapt to a role as subjects, particularly to overlords who were non-Moslem. Nor could their goodwill have been gained by the studied exclusion of local elements from responsible posts: by 1920, out of the 507 senior personnel in the civil administration, that is, personnel with a monthly salary of 600 rupees or 45 pounds sterling or more, only 20 were Iraqis, the remainder, except for 7 Indians, being British nationals.[42] This should go far to account for the prominent part played by

the “aristocracy” of officials in the agitation that ensued in the Uprising of 1920. To this class, in fact, belonged 4 of the 8 members of the central committee of Ḥaras-il-Istiqlāl or the “Guard of Independence,” the real guiding nucleus of the nationalist movement at Baghdād, namely, ‘Āref Ḥikmat al-Alūsī, Nājī Shawkat, Jalāl Bābān,[43] and, last but not least, the former landowner and higher official ‘Alī Āl-Bāzirgān, a founder and director of the People’s School,[44] a nationalist headquarters,[45] and one of the most active and most able organizers that the “Guard of Independence” possessed.[46] Another administrator-*mallāk* who figured conspicuously in the working up of popular sentiment against the English was the ex-mayor Rif‘at ach-Chādirchī, father of Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, the future leader of the National Democratic party. His activities led to his exile to Isṭanbūl, from which place he sent letters to his friends in Iraq advising them to cast in their lot with the army of Muṣṭafa Kemāl.[47] Also of the administrative class was Amīn al-‘Umarī, who served as liaison officer between the Kemālists and the Sharīfian force that fought British troops at Tall A‘far that same year.[48] All this is but another confirmation of the elementary truth that no class will for long accept a change adverse to its interests without opposition or violence.

After the founding of the monarchy in 1921, the old “aristocracy” of officials was incorporated into the rebuilt administrative machine. However, with certain exceptions, its Turkish component declined, relatively speaking, in importance, which was but a natural consequence of the end of Turkish rule. At the same time, the class as a whole, while sharing the displeasure of the *sādah* at the swift rise of the ex-Sharīfian officers, accommodated itself to the new order of things and took pains to be on good terms with both the king and English power. It became, eventually, a part of the political class, receiving in the period 1921-1958 110 out of the 575 ministerial appointments and 6 out of the 58 appointments to the premiership (see Tables 7-3 and 7-2). But it must be pointed out that no less than 62.7 percent of the ministerial appointments went to members of only 5 families, the Bābāns obtaining 29, the Daftarīs 13, the ‘Umarīs 11, the Shawkats 10, and the Sulaimāns 6. Moreover, neither the class in general, which was never very large, nor any of its members, not even its 5 premiers–Nājī Shawkat, Ḥikmat Sulaimān, Arshad al-‘Umarī, Muṣṭafa

al-‘Umarī, and Aḥmad Mukhtār Bābān[49]–pulled much real weight or articulated political roles of first importance. Aḥmad Mukhtār Bābān, a prime minister from May to July 1958 and chief of the Royal Dīwān from 1946 to 1954, scarcely showed any capacity for initiative, and was a sheer instrument in the hands of Crown Prince ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh. So was Arshad al-‘Umarī, a premier in 1946 and 1954 and a man of no political instinct, but an efficient and hardworking official. Nājī Shawkat, also a competent administrator, had for a time in the twenties moved in the shadow of ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa‘dūn, but in 1932 rose to the premiership on the strength of his complete subservience to Faiṣal I. Muṣṭafa al-‘Umarī, who headed the Cabinet in 1952, possessed experience and political cunning, but was hampered by his craving for riches and a commonly held belief that he was corrupt and abused his office. Ḥikmat Sulaimān, who surpassed the others in imaginative power, was also the most adventurous. As noted elsewhere, he was one of the leading spirits in the military coup of 1936 but, though in the ten months or so that followed this event he occupied the forefront of the political stage, he proved to be a mere stalking horse for General Bakr Ṣidqi.[50] In brief, it could be said that, on the whole, the old “aristocracy” of officials and its descendants were, under the monarchy, more important administratively than politically. In other words, they were essentially professional bureaucrats, and only rarely an initiating political force.

Significantly, except for the Bābāns, none of the old administrative families was among the biggest landed families in 1958, that is families owning more than 30,000 dūnums (see Table 5-3). Nor were they among the families worth one million dīnārs or more (consult Table 9-13). But close to the mark was Muṣṭafa al-‘Umarī, who owned several houses and 12,732 dūnums of good land in the province of Mosul, and held shares in Spinneys Co., and in a number of smaller commercial concerns. For his part, Ḥikmat Sulaimān was, when the Revolution of July broke out, in the process of transferring to the Iraqi Teachers’ Association, for the sum of 750,000 dīnārs, title to the better portion of the 16,676 dūnums that he owned in the outskirts of Greater Baghdād and, despite the checks placed by the revolution on dealings in land, he succeeded in completing the transaction. Similarly, Nājī Shawkat made half a million dīnārs in the fifties from the sale of the 400 dūnums that he possessed in the industrial Dorah region, and which he had purchased a few decades earlier at 3 dīnārs the

dūnum.[51] However, in the closing years of the monarchy quite a few of the "aristocrat-officials" lived, like Arshad al-'Umarī, merely on their salaries or their pensions.

9

THE *CHALABĪS* AND THE JEWISH MERCHANTS AND MERCHANT-*ṢARRĀFS*

The word *chalabī* comes from the Turkish *chalapī*, a derivative of "Chalap"–God–and originally signified "linked or near to God" but in the first decade of the monarchy had the meaning of "gentleman," and was an appellation of honor or dignity attached to merchants, if not of affluence, at least of high social standing. The title was a carry-over from Ottoman times, but as late as 1958 still had its fascination for the big merchants of Iraq. By their employees and laborers they were always saluted with the honorific *chalabī*.

In Baghdād wealthy *chalabīs* were accepted by the landed *sādah* as their equals: the two classes frequently intermarried. Thus marital ties united the Sādah al-Gailānī and the Dallah Chalabīs,[1] the Sādah al-Alūsi and the Shāhbandar Chalabīs,[2] and the Sādah al-Ḥaidarī[3] and the Kubbah Chalabīs.[4] Such intermarriage appears to have long been countenanced in Baghdād. Carsten Niebuhr, one of the more perceptive of European scholars, remarked in 1765, apparently with marriage practices at Baghdād in mind, that "the Arabs of the cities, who have more need of money than the Arabs of the desert, look often less to birth than to wealth when they marry."[5] In some of the outlying towns, however, persons of elevated status took a somewhat different view of the mercantile class. In 1820 at Sulaimāniyyah, a member of the local, tribally based, Kurdish aristocracy–a Bābān–commenting upon one of his relations, contemptuously observed: "He has been so long in Baghdād that he has lost all traces of clanship; he has become no better than a merchant!"[6] In Mosul in the days of the British Occupation, only the more considerable and more powerful *chalabīs*–the Sabunjīs, for example–stood "almost on terms of equality" with the *sādah*.[7] Even in Baṣrah, as late as the thirties, those merchants alone enjoyed social

eminence who issued from the *shuyūkh aṣl*, that is, from the "shaikhs of noble lineage,"[8] such as the Ḍukairs, who traced their descent from the tribe of ʻAnizah.[9] After the thirties, wealth became generally more decisive as a measure of urban social differentiation.

If, as a rule, the *chalabīs* were, or at least had been, wealthy merchants, not all wealthy merchants were *chalabīs*. Apart from the relatively few rich *ashrāf*-merchants or *shuyūkh aṣl*-merchants, the non- *chalabīs* were either parvenus to wealth, and thus less honored socially, or non-Moslems, and primarily members of the Jewish community of Iraq. However, instances are not completely lacking of Christians or Jews attaining the title of *chalabī*,[10] but this occurred so infrequently that it would not be inappropriate to use the term exclusively of the upper layer of Moslem merchants.

Although, in the first decade of the monarchy, some *chalabīs* were, according to Iraqi standards and even by a European yardstick, very wealthy, the financial capacity of the Arab mercantile class as a whole was scarcely great. One reason for this is the distrust that the Arab traders had for the method of cooperative enterprise. They had not yet discovered, or had but dimly or inadequately perceived, the possibilities and power of economic combination. "There is probably in all the world," affirmed in 1909 a British merchant with many years of commercial experience in Baghdād, "no keener or more intelligent individual trader than the Arab merchant but to this individual trading he almost invariably strictly limits himself. Trading partnerships are the exception and even the members of the old Arab trading families prefer to work alone and be bound by no partnership ties, even with their blood relations."[11] One saying, which was popular in the past among Baghdād merchants, ran: *Qidr-ush-sharākah mā yuṭbukh*–"The pot of partnership (or the mixed pot) does not cook."[12] The old Arab traders, it would seem, lacked confidence in one another. Their guardedness towards partnerships may also have sprung from their belief that secrecy was essential for success. On the other hand, in Ottoman times it was not legally easy to combine: no joint-stock company could be set up without an imperial edict.[13] More than that, the merchants, at least before the 1908 Young Turk Revolution, were reluctant to draw attention to themselves or to the fact that they were wealthy, for fear of attracting the

greed of arbitrary rulers. At any rate, it is significant that in 1921, the year of the founding of the monarchy, there were only three national joint-stock companies in the whole of Iraq.[14]

In a deeper sense, the weak monetary capacity of the Arab merchants flowed from their general existential conditions. To understand these conditions properly, it is necessary first to look back to the circumstances affecting trade in the preceding hundred years.

Even though some of the ruling pashas of Mamlūk Iraq appear to have discovered the connection between the unhampered flow of goods and the enrichment of their treasuries, in the first third of the nineteenth century difficulties confronted commerce at every turn.

Land transport was carried on largely by means of camels, mules, and donkeys. There were hardly any wheeled vehicles. The streets in the cities were too narrow for carts or wagons, and the soft soil of a large part of the country, particularly in the south, could not, in the absence of adequate care, support wheels. The tracks were also impassable in the south when the Tigris and Euphrates were in flood.

The perils on the road necessitated travel in armed caravans. The carriers and the escorts were usually hardened tribesmen. Just as some tribes within the tribal confederations specialized in agriculture or sheep breeding, or even in shopkeeping, others were exclusively carriers for hire.[15]

Before the formation of a caravan, the carriers held a meeting with the principal merchants who desired to despatch their goods, and came to an agreement with them as to the transport charges, which were always paid in advance.[16] As was the custom, the agreement was reached in the presence of *Ra's-ut-Tujjār*, or the Chief of the Merchants.[17] The carriers apparently assumed complete responsibility for the merchandise and conveyed it at their own risk,[18] which suggests that transport was already a specialized branch of activity and that trade was carried on by correspondence. It was also sometimes the case that a trading family would have members permanently residing in the various countries with which it conducted its business. In earlier centuries, as at the time of the visit to Iraq of the German physician and merchant Dr. Leonard Rauwolff (1574) and the Portuguese traveler Pedro Texeira (1604), the merchants accompanied their goods and made their purchases abroad themselves. They then traveled,

according to Texeira, in camel panniers that were something like cradles, hooded and lined so that one man could sit in them sheltered from cold and rain. The seat of the pannier customarily had a secret nook, which was used to hide precious stones and other things of value.[19]

The caravan consisted usually of hundreds, and sometimes of two or three thousand camels,[20] and was under the charge of a shaikh or *kārwānbāshī*.[21] He and part of the escort rode ordinarily in front. The *beyrakdar*– the standard-bearer–came immediately behind them. Many of the fusiliers went on foot and surrounded the laden camels. The caravan had also its *chāwīsh*, *mu'azzin*, and *qahwajī*. The task of the first was to announce the decisions of the *kārwānbāshī* relating to marches, supply, stations, and the like. The *mu'azzin* exercised the function of a chaplain, and the *qahwajī* prepared and served coffee at the halting places.[22]

In the big caravans, such as those that went across the desert to Aleppo, were also many traveling artisans: shoemakers, barbers, shoeing smiths, joiners, and others, who were of great use and who profitably plied their trade. There was, in fact, a continual sale and purchase of goods. It was a sort of a mobile market where all objects of first necessity could be found. The bustle and abundance, Rousseau tells us, contrasted sharply with the profound silence and savage nudity of the desert.[23]

At nightfall the caravans usually halted. In the towns on the way and in the open country near the rivers, *khans* or *caravanserais* were built for the accommodation of the travelers and their goods.[24] In the desert, tents were pitched for the purpose. Some of the *khans* were free "for the love of God," and in the others moderate fees were charged.

A caravan from Baghdād to Aleppo, such as the one in which Rousseau traveled, took in good season at least sixty, and sometimes ninety, days to reach its destination.[25] A voyage in a fast caravan from Baghdād to Mosul lasted no fewer than eight or ten days. Even a town as close to Baghdād as Ḥillah could not be reached in less than three days.[26]

The rivers, which were Iraq's real trade routes south of Baghdād, were navigated by craft, some of which, in their shape and construction, belonged to very ancient times. Trading on the Tigris between Baghdād and Qurnah were the *safīnah* and the *quffah*. The hundred-ton *safīnah* was sailed or rowed with the stream, but upstream had, as a rule, to be towed or punted. The *quffah*, a round wicker basket, which was mentioned by

Herodotus in the account he gave of Babylon,[27] could hold up to twenty passengers, but could only be used with difficulty against the stream. On the Shaṭṭ-il-ʻArab plied mostly the long narrow fifty-ton *balams*.[28] Along the coasts of the Gulf sailed the bigger and more "modern" *baghalahs*.[29]

In 1794, when Olivier traveled in the Pashalik of Baghdād, nearly all merchandise arriving at Baṣrah from the Gulf was transported to Ḥillah and from there by land to Baghdād, as it was easier then to go up the Euphrates than the Tigris.[30] A few decades later it would appear that the Tigris was preferred also on the voyage upstream. It took seven or eight days from Baghdād down to Baṣrah when the northerly winds prevailed, and ten to fifteen days in calms. Upstream, however, the same distance was covered in thirty to forty days, as the boats had to be tracked or towed along the shore most of the way.[31]

On account of the numerous rapids and rocks, navigation upstream on the Tigris north of Baghdād was impracticable. Downstream, *kalaks* were used.[32] These were spars made of willow or tamarisk, supported on inflated animal skins and capable of carrying up to thirty-five tons. On arrival at Baghdād, which was reached from Mosul in four or five days, the *kalaks* were broken up, the spars sold, and the skins taken back on pack animals to Mosul. Above Hīt, the upper Euphrates was navigated downstream only in certain sections, and then largely by the five-ton flat-bottomed *shakhtūrs*.

Merchandise, whether moving by river or by land, was everywhere a tempting prey to pillaging tribesmen. Whenever, for one reason or another, the Mamlūk pashas' grip on the country weakened, every petty shaikh became a sovereign prince and a roving transit barrier. Caravans had to buy at all times the quiescence of the powerful shaikhs through whose *dīrahs*[33] they passed. Against payments known as *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood),[34] they were afforded protection and allowed to proceed unmolested. The Baghdād-Aleppo caravan, in which Rousseau traveled in 1808, had to pay the *ukhuwwah* six times to that many subtribes of the ʻAnizah confederation.[35] The boats on the rivers, which seldom attempted the voyage singly and proceeded almost always in groups, were also subjected to the shaikhly *tisyārs* or passage tolls.[36] Moreover, the Mamlūk pashas imposed their own customs dues on all goods entering towns, irrespective of whether they came from abroad or from the interior of the country.

Of all the difficulties confronting the merchants, none perhaps were more harassing than these tolls and exactions of shaikh and pasha. In 1794, when the Pashalik of Baghdād was in the hands of the great Sulaimān Pasha, and trade was under fewer burdens or restraints than at any other period of Mamlūk hegemony, and people were nowhere else in the Ottoman lands as little oppressed as they were in Iraq, merchandise coming from Baṣrah to Baghdād by way of the Euphrates incurred no fewer than nine tolls. At Baṣrah native merchants[37] paid 7½ percent of the value of their goods. Between Baṣrah and Ḥillah seven assessments had to be met. The first–first piastres[38] a bale–bale acquitted on leaving Baṣrah; the last, consisting of three piastres a bale, was rendered at Ḥillah; the others were smaller. On entering Baghdād, the toll was 8½ percent on weighable goods, such as metals, coffee, sugar, etc., and 5 percent on other goods, such as textile fabrics. Over and above this, all commodities brought in English ships–ships greater part of the imports of Baṣrah–rah to pay a duty and a consulage to the East India Company amounting to 6 percent.[39]

The merchants were also subject, on the same basis as other taxpayers, to defence and protection levies known as *i'ānah jihādiyyah*–jihād's assistance; *imdādiyyah safariyyah–safariyyah–travel* assistance; and *imdādiyyah khafariyyah–khafariyyah–guard* assistance, in proportions unknown to us. Again, traders in foodstuffs, textiles, jewelry, etc., had to pay an income tax, the *rasm-il-iḥtisāb* or "accounting fee," otherwise known as *shahriyyat-id-dakākīn*– monthly shop tax–tax *yaumiyyat-id-dakākīn*–daily shop tax.[40]

Commerce was not hampered only by fiscal impositions or the inadequacy of communications. The agriculture of the country, from which commerce could have drawn sustenance, was in a state of decline. It is true that there were limited exports of dates;[41] that rice, wheat, barley, and other articles played a role in internal trade; that the cultivated areas expanded and contracted according to the far-sighted leniency or destructive greed of the pashas and their tax-farmers; and that the last of the Mamlūks, Dāūd Pasha (1817–1831) spared for reclamatory schemes as much attention as his meager resources or other concerns of the pashalik allowed. But on the whole, agriculture was in a depressed condition, and to this had contributed, as noted elsewhere, the ruin of the ancient dikes, the neglect of water conservancy, the vagaries of the rivers, the spread of swamps and

salination, the incursions and feuds of the tribes, and the recurring general insecurity which is always detrimental to economic progress.

The local handicraft industry was also in a comparatively low state. At Mosul, which had been reputed for its tissues–tissues word “muslin” being derived from the name of the place–place only manufacture engaged in on more than a limited scale was that of cotton cloths of the coarser kind,[42] but some weaving of silk, metal-working, and other arts were still carried on. Again, as a manufacturing center, Baghdād possessed little of the splendor that it once enjoyed,[43] though, as could be inferred from statistical evidence of a later period,[44] the city contained numerous weavers of cotton, silk, and wool. Much tanning was also done, and copper, silver and goldsmiths could be found in all the main towns. Moreover, in several places boats were built, no fewer than one thousand being made annually at Hīt alone.[45] However, except for the founding of a few cloth and gun factories by Dāūd Pasha,[46] industry was generally on the downgrade, and organized not for export but for local consumption. More than that, in many cases no middleman intervened between the artisan and his customer, the artisan selling his products in the same shop in which he manufactured them.

There was, to be sure, some compensation for commerce in the animate bedouin economy, in the trade of wool, sheep, camels, and Arabian horses. The flow of pilgrims to the Shī‘ī holy cities also enlivened petty trade, but a retarding factor in this regard was the inveterate hostility between Turk and Persian, and the endless conflicts to which it gave rise.

Yet, despite all adverse circumstances, a certain vivacity, even if of an unstable nature, characterized the commercial life of much of the Mamlūk period. According to Rousseau, in the reign of Sulaimān the Great (1780–1802) Baghdād was the center of a rich and extensive commerce: the products of Asia and Europe flowed “from all parts” and while, ensuring abundance, provided the merchants with “great means of speculation and the certitude of quick and brilliant fortunes.”[47] True, in the succeeding decade languor set in mainly by reason of factional strife among the Mamlūks,[48] the depredations of the Wahhābīs of Najd, and the dangers to navigation in the Mediterranean arising out of the conflict between England and Napoleonic France.[49] But, under the firm and tolerably peaceful rule of Dāūd Pasha (1817–1831), Baghdād “again became, as before, a rich emporium”[50] and one contemporary traveler did not hesitate to affirm that

“its bazaars are splendid beyond anything we have ever seen in other parts, even as we might almost assert in the capital of the Turkish empire itself.”[51]

If local agriculture and industry were in poor condition, what, we may wonder, was the source of a vivacity so noticeable and yet so precarious? It is essential for a true understanding of the history of the Iraqi merchant class to bear in mind that in the period of the Mamlūks and for a long time after their fall, the transit trade through Iraq completely dwarfed the trade of the whole country.

In its flourishing ‘Abbasid days, Baghdād was a great center of commerce and the point of intersection of important trade routes linking Persia, India, and China with Asia Minor, the Mediterranean, and Europe. After its subjection to the Mongols (1258), Iraq was cut off from the Mediterranean and declined as a channel for the east-west trade. But, as is apparent from the work entitled *Secrets of the Faithful*, written by the Venetian nobleman Marino Sanuto in 1321,[52] the most valuable goods, such as spikenard, cloves, nutmegs, and mace, continued to be brought from Baghdād–and Tabrīz–to the Mediterranean, and only the bulky goods of inferior value passed through the Red Sea and Egypt. The more enduring harm came with the discovery of America (1492) and the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope (1498), the two events that radically upset the structure of world commerce and turned its main currents from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic.

But Iraq’s transit trade, though seriously affected, was not ruined. The Moslem–Moslem to some extent the European–lands continued to make use of the old routes. Moreover, the position of Iraq appears to have relatively improved when it was joined again to the Mediterranean littoral in the wake of the conquest of Baghdād in 1534 by the Turkish Sultan Sulaimān the Magnificent. There is, in fact, evidence of a thriving inter-Moslem trade after that time. The German merchant Rauwolff reported in 1574 that to Baghdād “many ship-loads are brought in daily, . . . so that in this town there is a great deposition of merchandizes . . . which are brought hither by sea as well as by land from several parts chiefly from Anatolia, Syria, Armenia, Constantinople, Aleppo, Damascus ... to carry them further into the Indies, Persia, etc . . . . ”[53] The briskness of the transit market at Baghdād also attracted the attention of Pedro Texeira in 1604,[54] and sixteen years later Mr. Munn, an official of the East India Company, brought out

that in his days the Turks sent annually from Aleppo and Isṭanbūl “500,000 sterling in money merely for Persian raw silk.”[55]

As far as can be gleaned from the meager sources available to us, one feature appears to have dominated this transit trade over the centuries from the conquest of Sulaimān the Magnificent (1534) down to the destruction of the Mamlūks (1831): it was, so to say, *migratory* in character. Although the route from India through the Gulf and the Iraqi river valleys, and then west to the Mediterranean or east to Persia was the shortest, the trade had a choice of routes and tended to flow into that channel which afforded it congenial conditions. Whenever insecurity or arbitrariness prevailed in the Iraqi valleys, the trade would almost desert Baghdād and seek other more favorable entrepôts. When protection and mutual confidence were again assured, or the conditions in the other entrepôts became intolerable, trade flowed back into its Iraqi course.

This characteristic of the transit trade determined the nature of the merchants connected with it: they were basically a migratory class. In other words, they shifted with the shift of the trade channels. For this reason they, or at least a goodly portion of them, could scarcely be said to have been an organic outgrowth of the economy of Iraq or to have been intimately related to its life. To them Iraq was largely a route affording passage to–or a country providing a distributing center for–for goods on which they speculated. Congruently enough, many of the merchants of Baghdād in the nineteenth century were Armenians from Isṭanbūl,[56] or Persians,[57] or Persian Jews,[58] and to a lesser extent Arabs from Najd and Syria.[59] Thus even in the lucrative transit trade, the Arab segment of the mercantile class had merely a share, and not the richest at that.

There is another feature to commerce as it was being conducted in Mamlūk days. Its structure, at least in the early nineteenth century, indicates that although some of the merchants engaged in it may have been amassing fortunes, Iraq, and more so the countries to which it served as an entrepôt, were actually being impoverished. As the accompanying Table 9–1 clearly shows, the intercourse with India–India main component of the transit trade–trade a constant drain upon the countries concerned for their gold and silver. Between 1802 and 1806 £1,017,051 in treasure, equaling 61.7 percent of all exports from the Gulf, were sent to Madras and Bombay alone.[60] This inevitably brought about a serious depreciation of the

currency.[61] The Turkish piastre, which was worth 2s.3d. in 1806,[62] exchanged at Baghdād in 1874 for only about 2¼d.[63] The large imports of piece goods (see Table 9-2) were bound also to have detrimental effects on the local textile industry. Thus when all is said, it becomes obvious that the vivacity of Mamlūk Iraq was to no little extent a deception. What was wealth to some merchants was poverty to the country.

TABLE 9-1

Exports from the Gulf (Mostly from Baṣrah and Bushire) to the British Settlements of Madras and Bombay (1802–1806)

(in pounds sterling*)

Year	*Total exports*	*Merchandise*	*Treasure*	*Percent of export of treasure to total exports*
1802	245,046	92,181	152,865	62.3
1803	322,472	117,516	204,956	63.5
1804	284,973	144,085	140,888	49.4
1805	366,902	135,125	231,777	63.1
1806	428,488	141,293	286,565	66.8

* Figures have been converted from sicca rupees to sterling at the rate of 2s.6d. per rupee.

Source: William Milburn (of the East India Company), *Oriental Commerce* (London, 1813), I, 123.

TABLE 9-2

Imports and Exports of the Gulf from and to British Settlements of Madras and Bombay in 1805

(in pounds sterling)

Imports		*Exports*	
Total	273,835	Total	366,902
Main Imports		Main Exports	
Piece goods	146,019 (53.3%)	Treasure	231,777 (63.1%)
Sugar	47,853	Horses	52,300
Grain	15,684	Dates	23,067
Drugs	9,037	Lametta	15,608
Cotton yarn and thread	8,153	Hing	8,974
Pepper	6,385	Shark's fins	5,892
Iron	6,225		

Source: Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, I, 123.

After the first third of the nineteenth century, the conditions of the Arab mercantile element grew worse. Writing in 1861, Sulaimān Fā'iq, a provincial governor and a historian of Baghdād, brought out that there had been under the Mamlūks "traders and men of comparative wealth" who now, however, did not have "a red fils" to their name. The economy, he lamented, had passed into the hands of "strangers."[64]

This state of things could to a certain extent be traced to the disasters of 1831. In that year a horrible plague broke out in Baghdād which at its height claimed daily, according to eyewitnesses, more than a thousand lives.[65] Its ravages did not subside until the Tigris burst its banks and inundated the city, throwing down nearly two-thirds of its houses and burying in one night 15,000 people.[66] The entire harvest for thirty miles all round Baghdād was also ruined.[67] Famine succeeded, and then, as if Baghdādis had not suffered enough, an army, sent by an Ottoman Porte no longer tolerant of the Mamlūks' eighty-year-long autonomy, laid siege to the distracted city. After a sharp contest and much slaughter, the remnants of the Mamlūks surrendered. From such compounded misfortunes the population of Baghdād dwindled in four short months from about 80,000 to about 27,000 souls.[68] In economic terms, this signified the sharp decrease of consumers and of the absorptive capacity of the local market. What was more important was the disappearance of many crafts forever.[69]

The impoverishment of the old Arab trading class was also not unconnected with the rising commercial ascendancy of the English in Iraq. This had long been in preparation. The groundwork had been laid by the East India Company, whose agents were seen in the port of Baṣrah as early as 1640,[70] although it was not until about a century later that the company succeeded in establishing a firm foothold in the country. By that time it had developed into an Asiatic power: it possessed an army and a navy and the authority to make peace and war east of the Cape of Good Hope.[71] Moreover, its influence had so grown in England that in 1806 it controlled 103 members of Parliament.[72] In Iraq its weight became considerable from about 1775, when even the armed vessels owned by the pasha of Baghdād were protected and captained by Englishmen, and curiously enough flew the British flag.[73] After 1798 the pasha himself–himself notable exception

being Dāūd, the last of the Mamlūks–shaped his conduct, more often than not, according to the suggestions of the company's Resident, who maintained links with the principal tribal shaikhs, and had under his command a flotilla of gun boats that navigated the Tigris and Euphrates without opposition.[74] The Resident's power at Baghdād, conjoined to the influence that the British ambassador acquired in the capital of the Ottoman Empire, no doubt assisted in no small measure the advance of British commercial interests in Iraq.

No less conducive to the expansion of English trade, and most directly hurtful to the Arab mercantile element, were the privileges and immunities which Englishmen–Englishmen other Europeans–Europeans. By virtue of the Anglo-Ottoman Treaty of Capitulations of 1675 and its amendments, English subjects and their agents and protégés could trade freely in any part of the Turkish dominions and "go and come . . . without any the least prejudice or molestation being given to their persons, property, or effects." They were also exempt from "all tribute," the goods imported or exported by them being merely liable to a duty of 3 percent and "not an asper[75] more."[76] In due course, this small charge greatly facilitated the sale in Iraq of cheap machine-made British goods, and for this reason, and because it rendered the adoption of protective measures impossible, the system of Capitulations must be accounted as the single most important factor in the decline of the local handicraft industry and of the traders connected with this sector of the economy. But more immediately injurious and keenly resented was the increasingly unequal fiscal treatment meted out to the Iraqi trading class. In 1794, for example, British–and other European merchants–merchants still paying 3 percent on their trade,[77] whereas Ottoman nationals paid 7½ percent at Baṣrah and up to 8½ percent at Baghdād.[78] Again, in 1833 "certain continental and foreign merchants" were charged 5½ percent (the old Capitulatory rate of 3 percent plus a 2½ percent *tamghah* or stamp duty) while local traders paid 20 percent "in various ways" on merchandise of the same caravan.[79] In addition, merchants under English protection were free from other exactions made by the pashas, under one pretext or another, from all degrees of people.[80] Although the rates that the Iraqi traders had to meet were admittedly "exorbitant and ruinous," the British political agent at Baghdād took, nonetheless, strong objection to the levying of the *tamghah*

in 1833 upon Englishmen. British merchants, he wrote to the British ambassador at Isṭanbūl,

> can completely undersell and command the market, provided the local government is steadily opposed in saddling indirect taxes, unsanctioned by our Treaty, upon our subjects. Our merchants show every inclination to settle here; they can import the goods from England at first cost and a small import duty, while the native merchants are obliged from want of capital and connexion to purchase at third or fourth hand with enhanced costs . . . . Success has nearly been attained here and it only remains for your Excellency to procure an order to the effect that as the Turkish Government cannot by treaty levy more than one entrance duty on goods of British merchants, no direct or indirect attempts shall be sanctioned in others to evade this article of the Capitulations.[81]

It was not until the Bālṭah Limānī Anglo-Ottoman Convention of 1838 that the British merchants were brought nearer to the level of the local traders, and only in regard to the charge payable on exports, "a fixed duty of 9 percent *ad valorem* in lieu of all other interior duties" being now added to the old rate of 3 percent. The tax on imports was raised to a mere 5 percent.[82] In other words, if, on the one hand, the new treaty tended to be more equitable in the matter of fiscal burdens, it was, on the other hand, clearly biased in favor of the products of Britain and its empire, and very prejudicial to the agriculture and industry of Iraq. At the same time, it permitted British merchants and their agents to purchase at all places all articles without exception for the purpose not only of exportation, but also of internal trade, and confirmed the advantages accruing to them under the Capitulations–Capitulations from the income tax and other imposts, and from the jurisdiction of the local courts–"now and for ever."[83]

The interests of British commerce went on growing in the second half of the nineteenth century, but after the eighteen-fifties their growth was no longer an unmixed ill for the local mercantile element, or at least for the economy of the country.

Among the factors that now gave a powerful impetus to British trade was the introduction on Iraq's rivers of steam-propelled transports which, by further facilitating the movement of British manufactured articles, intensified the decline of Iraq's handicraft industry but, by tying Iraq closer to British and other foreign markets, revitalized its agriculture. One other by-effect was the passing of the country's principal communications into British hands. True, the first steamship service, which was instituted in 1859–the Oman-Ottoman–Ottoman owned by the Turkish government, but its boats were badly equipped and inefficiently managed, so that the Lynch Company, a British firm, which obtained its concession in 1861, had before long its own way on the rivers and made the most of it. By the early years of this century, it was charging for the four days' journey from Baṣrah to Baghdād 40 shillings, and often as high as 80 shillings a ton,[84] whereas the freight for the month-long voyage from London to Baṣrah, including the Suez Canal dues, came from 20 to 37 shillings, and was sometimes as low as 15 shillings.[85] In the words of Mr. Cree, a partner of Blockey, Cree, and Co., and "a highly respected, experienced, and . . . successful man of business,"[86]

> the whole country groaned under these conditions . . . . Grain grown for export often paid in river freight . . . 50% of its cost in the market of Baghdād and thus the money which should have been coming back to enrich the agriculturists and the country generally was going into the pockets of the Lynch Co. So secure and comfortable was the position of this concern, drawing without an effort its large profits . . . that not once during [my] 18 years' residence [in Iraq] has the country been visited by one of the directors of the Company. Like absentee Irish landlords the members of the family, controlling the Company, lived in England, spending there the revenues drawn from the suffering trade of the country.[87]

River freights continued to rule high until 1904, when Sultan 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd sold to himself "for a mere song" the old fleet of the Oman-Ottoman and brought it under the Saniyyah administration, that is, under the department that managed his private estates in Iraq, which, by putting the old boats into proper repair, building new barges, and bringing into service

two large new steamers, lifted from Iraq's back the burden of the Lynch Co.s virtual monopoly. By 1910 the freight from Baṣrah to Baghdād had sunk to 25s., and down the river to only 5s.6d. a ton.[88] If the profits of the Lynch family declined, the trade and agriculture of the country gained pace.

The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 reinforced the effects of the new river communications. The penetration of the products of British industry deepened: the value of Iraq's imports of cotton and woolen goods through the port of Baṣrah increased from £51,000 in 1868–1870 to £1,128,000 in 1897-1899 and £3,066,000 in 1907-1909.[89] The greater portion of the profits from this trade went to Manchester, England. At the same time, as could be imagined, the ground was cut more and more from under the feet of Iraq's handloom weavers: at Baghdād they still numbered about 3,500 in 1866,[90] and the products of their looms were regarded even in 1878 as very superior in "brilliancy and permanence" to the printed cottons of Manchester;[91] but by 1931 there were, in addition to a factory with 14 handlooms and 30 laborers, only about 120 handlooms in the homes of weavers-owners, which produced a maximum of six meters of cloth a day and were barely scraping along.[92]

The piercing of the Suez Canal also deprived Iraq at a blow of most of its transit of Indian goods, inducing a short-term commercial depression at Baghdād, which was aggravated by Persia's greater reliance on the port of Bushire[93] and Russia's increasing intercourse with Persia by way of the Caspian Sea.[94] But the transit merchants were, it will be remembered, an essentially migratory class. Their capital was also, in many instances, carefully distributed in various countries. Some of them most probably turned their attention elsewhere. But in Iraq itself a new field of exploitation came into view and soon perforce absorbed whatever idle liquid money there was.

It is rather striking that the land settlement policy of Midḥat Pasha should have been launched at this time. It is difficult, however, to say whether there was any direct connection between the new policy and the depressed condition of the merchants. At any rate, *mīrī* or state land began now to be alienated in *ṭāpū* at trifling prices or, to be precise, at no more than 3s.6d. or 4s. an acre.[95] Even trading men from distant places took advantage of the new opportunities: to cite one example, Michel Zarīfī, a leading Greek merchant and financier of Isṭanbūl, acquired in this period

title to no fewer than 180,000 dūnums or 45,000 hectares of land in Balad-ruzz,[96] a district in the province of Diyālah to the northeast of Baghdād. Similarly, the Lynch family, benefiting from an Ottoman law of 1867 that granted foreigners the right to possess real property,[97] purchased a "very extensive" tract of date country up the Shaṭṭ-il-'Arab.[98]

Merchants not only transferred some of their capital to the land, but also some ingredients of their mentality. In other words, they tended to look upon their new acquisitions not only as productive units, but also as objects of speculation. The price of a *jarīb* of date-palms, that is, of a hectare including one hundred of such palms, rose from about 30 Turkish pounds[99] in the 1880s to about 80-100 pounds in the 1890s in the neighborhood of Baghdād,[100] and from 200 rupees[101] "formerly" to 1,000 rupees in the 1890s[102] and 7,410 rupees in 1919[103] in the Shaṭṭ-il-'Arab region. But these higher prices reflected also the progress of agriculture. Indeed, what had encouraged the merchants to invest in land or in its produce, apart from the factors already mentioned, was the growing demand of Europe for the dates and grain of Iraq. The value of the country's export of dates through the port of Baṣrah rose from £67,000 in 1868 to £328,000 in 1888, £386,000 in 1908, and £582,000 in 1913. Again, the value of the export of wheat and barley increased from £16,000 in 1868 to £72,000 in 1888, £612,000 in 1908, and £373,000 in 1913.[104] This was the other side, the positive side, of the effects of the new river communications and of the opening of the Suez Canal.

However, agriculture and agricultural exports grew also under another stimulus: the Anglo-Ottoman Commercial Treaty of 1861. By virtue of this new Capitulations agreement, the duty on goods imported from Britain or from any of its dominions was pushed up from 5 to 8 percent, and the duty on goods exported from Iraq by British subjects or their agents was cut down from 12 to 8 percent, and annually thereafter by 1 percent until it became fixed at 1 percent *ad valorem*.[105]

Of course, British commercial preponderance remained unshaken. Despite the new import tariff–and its further increase to 11 percent in 1907[106]–the products of Manchester were still cheaper than those of home industry[107] and their use spread more widely. Moreover, British firms–firms & Co., Darby Andrews & Co., Muir Tweedy & Co., and Gray, Mackenzie & Co., among others–benifited sooner or later from the fall in the export

duty, inasmuch as they in time engrossed to themselves much of the advantage of the export trade.[108] They also continued to be differentiated from local merchants by undue privileges: down to the First World War, for example, they were exempt from *at-tamattu'*[109]– the Ottoman income tax[110]–which, when introduced into Iraq in the 1890s, equaled 5 percent of yearly mercantile profits,[111] but after 1907 became specific in some instances and proportional in others, traders being ranged in groups or grades according to the nature of their business or their taxable capacity, and individuals within the highest income brackets paying a maximum of fifty Turkish pounds.[112]

The British economic position was consolidated by the setting up in the 1890s of branches at Baghdād, Mosul, and Baṣrah for the Imperial Ottoman Bank, an Anglo-French group, and in 1912 at Baghdād for the Eastern Bank, a British establishment.[113] Except for the credit operations of Iraq's *ṣarrāfs*,[114] the two banks now held mastery of the financial situation.

In 1910, after a visit to the country's only seaport, an Iraqi member of the Ottoman parliament wrote to the Turkish paper *Ṭanīn:*

> At whatever part of Baṣrah you look, a thousand different things connected with England will immediately strike your attention and you will feel how deep the claws of English influence have sunk into our country's flesh. The very *ḥammāls*– street porters–porters to their own dialect the naval and other technical terms which have been Arabicized from the English and decline and conjugate them.[115]

The landing of British troops in Iraq in 1914 and the ensuing occupation completed the process of turning the country into an economic adjunct of the British Empire.[116] By 1919 the British commercial capital locked up in Iraq had reached five million pounds. Moreover, in that year, out of the total of sixteen million Turkish pounds, at which Iraq's imports stood, ten million or almost two-thirds came from England.[117] The bulk of the once independent Moslem merchants, if they had not gone under, had–had when competing against commission agents and trading in English machine-made goods on their own accounts, or helping only indirectly in the propagation

of these goods-become in essence merchant-intermediaries or client-merchants, mere cogs on the rim of England's imperial economic wheel.

From the foregoing observations it should be evident why in 1927, when the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce was organized,[118] and as late as the financial year 1938-1939, as is clear from Tables 9-3 and 9-4, British companies or companies with mixed Anglo-French or Anglo-French-American capital formed a majority of the Chamber's "first class" members, that is, members whose "financial consideration" was defined by more than 22,500 dīnārs and a maximum of 75,000 dīnārs, the definition being made essentially in the light of the members' capital and volume of business. Nor should it be surprising that to this class belonged only one Arab Moslem concern, that of Ibrahīm Maḥmūd Shāhbandar, whose father was, logically enough, an agent of a British firm–firm Brothers of Aberdeen[119]–and, incidentally, descended from a family of *chalabīs* that owed its position, as its name indicates, to a nineteenth-century director of the Custom House.[120]

But, as further emerges from the tables just referred to, out of the total of 25 "first-class" members of the Chamber in 1938-1939, no fewer than 10 were Jewish. So were also 215, or 43.2 percent of the 498 who formed the entire membership of the Chamber. In other words, at Baghdād, in point of number the Jews constituted perhaps the most important mercantile group,[121] and in point of wealth thoroughly dwarfed the *chalabīs* and other Arab trading elements. This must now be accounted for.

The significance of the Jews in the commercial affairs of Iraq was not something newly manifested or recognized. A British consular report dating from 1879 referred unambiguously to the concentration in their hands at Baghdād of much of the buying and selling in English goods.[122] "The Jews," maintained another confidential account from Baghdād written in 1910, "have literally monopolised the local trade and neither Mohammedans nor Christians can compete with them."[123] If at Mosul they played a very minor economic role, a good portion of Baṣrah's commerce was, at least in 1920, under their control.[124] Little incidents that occurred from time to time told much of the strength of their monetary situation. In March 1926, for example, when a Jewish merchant engaged in the Persian transit trade declared that he was bankrupt, something like an economic crisis was engendered in Baghdād.[125] Even in such small and insignificant

towns as Daltāwah and Shāhrabān, the refusal of Jewish traders in February 1918 to take Turkish money as small change caused a dislocation in the bazaar.[126]

TABLE 9-3

Composition of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce for the Financial Year 1938-1939

Class	"Financial consideration"[a] maximum limit in dīnārs[b]	Total no. of members[c]	British	Other Western	Iraqi Jewish	Other Jewish	Iraqi Arab Moslem Sunnī	Iraqi Arab Moslem Shī'ī	Iraqi Kurd Moslem Sunnī	Iraqi Christian[d]	Iraqi Sabean	Arab other than Iraqi	Others
First	75,000	25	12	2[e]	7	3[f]	1						
Second	22,500	22	3		11		1	2[g]		2		3[h]	
Third	7,500	84	5	2	44		8	11	2	6		4	2[i]
Fourth	2,250	130	1	3	73		15	17		12[j]		2	7[k]
Fifth	375	162	2	2	58		39	33		18	4	5	1[l]
Sixth	100	75			19		17	24	4	5	5	1	
Total		498	23	9	212	3	81	87	6	43	9	15	10

[a]The "financial consideration" of each member was determined by the administrative committee of the Chamber in the light of the member's capital and volume of business and "such other facts and circumstances" as the committee deemed fit to take into account. Article 1 of Internal Rules of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce for 1936 refers.

[b]One dīnār equals one pound sterling.

[c]Membership included companies and individual merchants and tradesmen.

[d]Inchides Armenians.

[e]One British-French and one (the Iraqi Petroleum Co.) British-French-American-Armenian.

[f]One French-Jewish and two British-Jewish.

[g]Includes one mixed Shī'ī-Sunnī company.

[h]"Includes one merchant of mixed Syrian-Turkish parentage.

[i]Persian Shī'īs.

[j]Includes one mixed Christian-Jewish concern.

[k]Three Persians and four Indians.

[l]Indian.

Source: Baghdād Chamber of Commerce, *Annual Report for 1937–38*, pp. 166-185. For help in identifying the nationality and denomination of members of the Chamber, I am indebted to members of various mercantile families, including the Dāmīrchīs and Fattāḥs.

TABLE 9-4

"First Class" Members of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce in 1938-1939, i.e., Members Whose "Financial Consideration" was Defined by More than 22,500 Dīnārs and a Maximum Limit of 75,000 Dīnārs[a]

Name of merchant or concern	*Nature of business unless clear from name of concern*	*Nationality and denomination*
ʿAdas I. & C. Ltd.	Merchants; and car and insurance agents	Iraqi Jews
African and Eastern	Importers and exporters	British
Andrew Weir & Co.	Merchants and contractors	British
Balfour Beatty & Co.	Civil and electrical engineers	British
Birch Marr & Co.	Engineers	British
Dāūd & Shaūl Rajwān & Sons	Tea merchants	Iraqi Jews
David Sassoon & Co.	Merchants and contractors	British Jews of Iraqi origin
Eastern Bank		British Jews of Iraqi origin
Frank C. Strick & Co.	Shipping agents and merchants	British
Haīm H. Nathaniel	Travel and transport agent	Iraqi Jew
Ibrahīm Maḥmūd ash-Shāhbandar & Co.	General merchants	Iraqi Arab Moslem Sunnī
Imperial Bank of Iran		British
Imperial Chemical Industries		British
Iraq Petroleum Co.		British-French-American-Armenian
Kheddūrī A. Zilkha	Merchant and *ṣarrāf* (half-broker, half-banker) with a branch on Wall Street[b]	Iraqi Jew
Lāwī, K. & E. M.	Motor car agents	Iraqi Jews
Nairn Transport Co.	Transport and travel agents	British
Orozdi Back Establishments	General merchants	French-Jewish
Ottoman Bank		British-French
Rāfidain Oil Co.		British
Shammāsh Bros.	Tea merchants	Iraqi Jews
Singer Sewing Machine Co.		British
Stephen Lynch & Co.	Owners of river steamers, merchants, and contractors	British
Thomas Cook & Son	Travel agents	British
Zion S. ʿAbbūdī	*Ṣarrāf*	Iraqi Jew

[a]The "financial consideration" of each member was determined by the administrative committee of the Chamber in the light of the member's capital and volume of business and "such other facts and circumstances" as the committee deemed fit to take into account. Article 1 of internal rules of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce for 1936 refers.

[b]The branch was opened in 1941

Source: Baghdād Chamber of Commerce, *Annual Report for 1937-38*, pp. 166-167.

How did the Jews come to form such an important element in the commerce of the country? It is perhaps necessary to point out at once that their commercial ascent coincided with the growth of English interests. It

may also be helpful to refer to another coincidence, that between the heightened pace of the English penetration of the Iraqi market and the rapid increase of the Jewish population of Baghdād in the second half of the nineteenth century (consult Table 9-5). The possibility of an underestimation of the number of Jews for the early part of the century cannot, of course, be excluded, the more so, inasmuch as many of them preferred in those days to keep out of sight rather than pay the capitation tax. But even if the estimates for that period were to be doubled or tripled, the subsequent increase was still considerable and, by and large, the result of a migration from Persia[127] which may have been partly provoked or aggravated by ill treatment.[128]

However, it would be an error to infer from the coincidence of the commercial rise of the Jews with the expansion of British trade that it was something that necessarily or entirely accorded with British desires. True, in the period of the British occupation, such evidence as is available points unmistakably to a favorable disposition toward Jewish merchants on the part of the ruling authority. “I have” wrote the British Civil Commissioner of Iraq in 1918, “always regarded active support of the Jewish commercial community as a potential asset of great political value and have done my best to demonstrate to them that the fruit of our intentions in this country will be palatable and beneficial to them, more so perhaps than to any other class.”[129] At the same time, far from helping each other, the Jewish and British traders were, at least from about the middle of the nineteenth century onward, essentially competitors. The Jews traded, of course, mostly in British goods, but they traded largely on their own accounts, importing the goods directly from India and Britain, whereas the British would have preferred to dot the Iraqi market with commission agents, or to have for their own nationals a direct share in the local trade. Though commission agents were to strike deeper roots in later years and to have their heyday in the oil-booming fifties and after the exodus of the Jews from Iraq,[130] this is how things appeared to an official British Committee on Industry and Trade in 1924:

TABLE 9-5

Growth of the Jewish Population of Baghdād(1794-1947)

Year	Estimated population of Baghdād	Estimated Jewish population	Percent
1794	80,000	2,500[a]	3.3
1830	80,000	10,000[b]	12.5
1877*	70,000	18,000[c]	25.7
1893	145,000	51,905[d]	35.8
1908	150,000	53,000[e]	35.3
1947†	515,459	77,417[f]	15.0

*The drop in the total population was due to the disasters of 1831. See pp. 235-236. The Jews appear to have suffered from these disasters as heavily as the other sections of the population. In fact, the plague of that year first broke out in the Jewish quarter of the city. See J. R. Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs* (London, 1840), I, 280.

† It should be borne in mind that there had been considerable migrations to Baghdād from the interior of the country in previous decades.

Sources

[a]Superior of Carmelites and Commercial Commissar of the French Consulate at Baghdād. See G. A. Olivier, *Voyage dans l'Empire Othoman, l'Egypte et la Perse*, IV (Paris, 1807), 324.

[b]Anthony N. Groves, *Journals of a Residence at Baghdād* (London, 1831), 21 and 114.

[c]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 78/2650, letter of 4 September 1877 from Surgeon Major W. H. Colvill, civil surgeon, Baghdād, to Colonel I. P. Nixon, resident in Turkish Arabia.

[d]Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie* (Paris, 1894), III, 90.

[e]Ḥabīb K. Chīha, *La province de Bagdad* (Cairo, 1908), 165.

[f]Figures supplied to this writer by Dr. Fūād Massī of the Directorate General of Census.

> Both the export and import trade of Iraq are in the hands of old established merchant firms to the virtual exclusion of the commission agent. It is a hard and fast merchant market; and to such a pitch of economy has the art of buying and selling been brought by Baghdād Jews since the war, that several British firms have closed their offices because their overhead expenses were greater than those of their oriental competitors.[131]

Obviously, the strongly marked capacity of the Iraqi Jewish merchants to operate with little waste and at a saving, and their other well-known qualities–qualities diligence, their savoir faire, their penchant for making money, and, generally, their aptitude for commercial transactions–transactions elements in their ascent to a high place in the commerce of the country.

But the relationship between Jewish and British traders was not always one of competition. Before 1813, that is, before the East India Company

was relieved of its long-held trading privileges in India,[132] the prospective competitors appear to have to some extent complemented one another. In other words, the Jews, being unable, in view of the company's monopoly, to trade in British or Indian goods on their own account, served often as agents for British traders, and thus benefited from all the privileges that accrued from their attendant condition as "protégés." The same status was apparently enjoyed also by Jews who migrated to India after 1813 and eventually returned to Iraq as agents for coreligionists that remained behind. When, for example, in 1841 the pasha of Baghdād levied, in the words of the British political agent, "unjust and repeated duties" on the merchandise of a number of Jewish traders–traders, in effect, meant that the pasha put their goods on a par with the goods of the Moslem merchants–merchants political agent protested that the traders in question were "Jews under the protection of this Residency, who have resided many years in India, have all their property there, and are agents for merchants now abiding there, and have been specially recommended to me on their return to this city by the Right Honourable the Governor General of India or the Honourable the Governor of Bombay."[133] Such diplomatic concern and the usually effective immunities of "protégés" no doubt gave at least a section of the Jewish mercantile community an advantage over Moslem traders, and should be counted as another factor in its remarkable success.

Not only in Iraq, but also in other Near Eastern countries, European merchants dealt almost exclusively with non-Moslem traders in the eighteenth century. The reserve and exclusiveness of Moslems have been suggested as largely accounting for this development,[134] although there are extant instructions by the East India Company dating from around the year 1800 which forewarned English traders arriving at Baṣrah that "after you are settled in your house, the merchants will come and pay you a visit; the Turks and Armenians will be very inquisitive about your affairs . . . "[135] which indicates that at least the "Turks" of Baṣrah–rah of the principal gateways for European goods into Iraq and Persia–Persia not as reserved as those of other Moslem cities.

What above all, as far as can be discerned, enabled the Jews to gain a foothold in the British trade and eventually assured them ascendancy over all other local merchants was their possession of capital in greater abundance. This was the result of their practical monopoly of the money-

lending and “banking,” that is, the *ṣairafah* business, and of their intimate links with their coreligionists–coreligionists often relatives–in India, Europe, and elsewhere, which made it possible for them to obtain ready money whenever they needed it, to employ bills and other instruments of payments in their transactions, to exchange business information and experience, and, of course, as time went on, to import goods from India and England directly without the intermediation of the English merchants.

The extent of the entrenchment of the Jews in the *ṣairafah* trade in the thirties may be gathered from Table 9-6. The situation was essentially the same in the nineteenth century. All the accounts refer to them as the *ṣarrāfs*, that is, the bankers and moneylenders of the Pashalik of Baghdād.[136] In fact, they were for the most part merchant*ṣarrāfs,* since they were active in both financial and commercial endeavors.

TABLE 9-6

Ṣarrāfs of Baghdād in 1936

Total number of *ṣarrāfs* listed in 1936 Iraq Directory	39
Number of Jews	35
Number of Christians	1
Number of (Shīʻī) Moslems	3

Source: Based on listings in the *Iraq Directory 1936,* Commercial Section, pp. 131 and 135.

The reason why the Moslems, as a rule, did not trade in money, was the explicit and unqualified Qurʻānic prohibition of usury.[137] The Jewish scriptures also forbad the taking of interest, but only from coreligionists, permitting it otherwise: “Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but unto thy brother thou shall not lend upon usury: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to.”[138]

Of course, usury had much to do with the large fortunes that the merchant-*ṣarrāfs* accumulated. While before the appearance of banks many proprietors deposited with them their liquid money without receiving any interest,[139] they themselves charged very high and sometimes exorbitant rates. In this regard Christian and Moslem moneylenders were as audacious

as their Jewish counterparts. It is not clear what rates were current at Baghdād in the nineteenth century. But in the 1880s cultivators were paying 30 to 40 percent for ready money in the Mosul *wilāyah*.[140] Some two decades later, *ṣarrāfs* were charging 24 percent in the city of Baṣrah.[141] Even as late as 1919, as high as 58 percent and sometimes over 100 percent was being exacted in devious ways from the tobacco growers of the Sulaimāniyyah province.[142] However, at Baghdād in 1907, that is, about a decade or so after the introduction of banks, the *ṣarrāfs'* ordinary rates for discounting bills varied from about 10 to 13 percent[143]

No less important than the *ṣairafah* in the rise of the Jews to commercial eminence was their connection with their coreligionists abroad. In our sources for nineteenth-century Iraq there are occasional references to inter-Jewish financial ties, largely because these ties figured in the relations between the Ottoman sultans and their nominal Mamlūk *wālīs*. Whenever the latter deemed it necessary to send remittances to Istanbūl and the roads were unsafe for the conveyance of bullion, they applied to the Jewish merchant-*ṣarrāfs* for bills.[144] These were drawn on their coreligionists in the Ottoman capital, and were made good on their arrival there. The Isṭanbūl merchant-*ṣarrāfs* indemnified themselves in the usual course of their mercantile transactions.

It is perhaps partly owing to their invaluable associations, and consequent knowledge of conditions in the various commercial and financial centers, that Jews were often appointed as *ṣarrāf bāshīs–s* bankers–bankers the Ottoman and Mamlūk courts.[145] Some *ṣarrāf bāshīs*, as is shown elsewhere, rose to great heights in the world of politics.

But from the point of view of commerce, what was of particular benefit to Jewish merchants was their ties with their Indian brethren, in view of the close dependence of the Iraqi and Persian markets on India. Many of the Jews of India were actually Baghdādis by origin. There had been, probably, a migration of Jews from Iraq to the Malabar coast as far back as the ninth century.[146] A medieval Hebrew moralist of Baghdād noted that everyone who desired to become rich betook himself to India. But before the beginning of the nineteenth century there were really no extensive Jewish settlements in that country.[147] It was only after the abolition of the East India Company's trading monopoly (1813) that Baghdādi Jewish merchants pushed forth in large numbers to India in search of gain. Some, like the

Sassoons,[148] settled in Bombay; others, like the families of Yehudah and Ezrah, established themselves in Calcutta.[149] For those of their relatives who remained behind this meant that piece goods and other products could now be imported directly from India. But before many years had passed, the trading spirit was to take the Jews to England itself and their success there enabled them to provide Baghdād merchants with British cottons directly from Manchester. More than that, manufactories of cotton goods, which sprang up in Bombay under the auspices of Baghdādi Jews,[150] began competing successfully with Lancashire in the eastern markets.

By the opening of this century nearly every important Jewish merchant of Baghdād had commercial houses of his own in India or England. Thus Ezra Sassoon Suhaiyik, who was worth about a million pounds sterling in 1919 and had great weight in the business world, was a proprietor of Messrs. J. S. Sykes & Co., in Manchester.[151] Other wealthy merchants with houses in Manchester were Ḥaskail Shammāsh, Sha'ūl Mu'allem Ḥaskail (David Brothers), and Yehūdah Zulūf. Zion Bikhor and Ezra Isḥāq Ṣāliḥ, both Baghdādi merchants, had firms in Bombay and London.[152] All these men had their money carefully distributed in several countries.

But the Baghdādis that dwarfed all others both in wealth and geographical ramification were the Sassoons, often referred to as the Rothschilds of the East, although the Sassoons were in essence merchants and the Rothschilds financiers. The founder of the House of Sassoon was Dāūd, son of Sassoon ben Ṣāliḥ, who was for many years the *ṣarrāf bāshī* of the Mamlūks of Baghdād. In 1829, at the age of thirty-seven, fearing, it is said, the vengeance of the *wālī,* for whose dismissal he had agitated, Dāūd fled from the country and eventually, in 1832, the Indian prospect beckoning to him, established himself in Bombay and began exporting from there English textiles to Persia and his native Iraq. As his business grew apace, his eldest son, 'Abdullah Sassoon (later Sir Albert Sassoon) took charge of operations at Baghdād. Before long, thanks to his familiarity with the requirements of the local markets, to trustworthy Jewish correspondents, and to what Denis de Rivoyre called "the regular and reasoned exploitation of the commercial resources of the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris,"[153] the most lucrative of the trade between India and Iraq lay under his control. By the 1850s he had not only discovered the Chinese market, but had already a virtual monopoly of the importing of opium, fabrics, and cotton

yarn into China. His firm was also active at Yokohama, Nagasaki, and other Japanese cities. When in the wake of the American Civil War the cotton famine came to Lancashire (1861), Dāūd Sassoon, who had some time before established branches in England, was quick to seize the unexpected opening and to ship to that country Indian yarn at swollen prices. After the death of Dāūd (1864), his descendants continued to expand, and their control in India and elsewhere came to embrace, in addition to the trading firm of David Sassoon & Co., the Sassoon Spinning and Weaving Co., the Sassoon and Alliance Silk Manufacturing Co., and the Port Canning and Land Improvement Co. (a vast agricultural enterprise in which 15,000 ryots labored). They also acquired considerable interests in the Oriental Life Assurance Co., the Prince of Wales Fire Insurance Co., the Imperial Bank of Persia, the Bank of China and Japan, the Imperial and Foreign Investment Agency Corporation, and the Trust and Loan Co. of China, Japan, and the Straits.[154]

When the Eastern Bank Ltd., which was registered in London in 1909 with a capital of two million pounds,[155] opened a branch in Baghdād in 1912, it looked on the surface as if British capital was extending its operations in Iraq, but in actuality it was only the descendants of the one-time *ṣarrāf bāshī* of the Mamlūks re-effecting anonymously, and on a more sophisticated plane, a financial presence in their old ancestral city.

If the geographical extension of the Jewish merchants of Baghdād, their links with their coreligionists, their monopoly of the *ṣairafah*, their command of capital, their status as protégés of foreign power, and their business acumen were largely responsible for the ascendancy that they attained, a share of the credit was also due to the relative tolerance and the not inconsiderable measure of self-government that they enjoyed under Moslem rule.

Under the Ottomans and Mamlūks, the Jews of Iraq, as other non-Moslem sects, administered their own communal affairs. They were constituted as an authorized community or *millah*, the government on the whole treating with them only through their appointed leaders. As Ottoman law became in the nineteenth century less dependent upon the Qur’ān, the authority of the Jewish leaders was somewhat reduced, but they continued to be primarily responsible to the state for the political control of their community.

At the head of the Jewish community in Baghdād stood a lay council and a spiritual council. The two councils existed from very old times[156] and were still functioning in the period of the monarchy. In the second half of the nineteenth century they derived legal validity from the sultan's Irādah–dah–of 1864[157] and more recently from the Jewish Community Law No. 77 of 1931.[158] The lay council was known as *al-Majlis-uj-Jismānī* and the spiritual as *al-Majlis-ur-Rūḥānī*.

In 'Abbāsid times the latter body was represented by the *gaon*, a religious dignitary, and the former by scions of leading Jewish families or the Exilarchs, that is, the Heads of the Exile.[159]

Under the Mamlūks, the *nasi*–literally, prince–prince the lay personages of the community. In the first third of the nineteenth century he wielded considerable power over his coreligionists and, according to Rabbi Israel-Joseph Benjamin II, "was able by dint of money to acquire a complete and absolute liberty of action and to exploit it for whatsoever suited his caprice or his interests."[160] At bottom he owed his position to his opulence and to the good pleasure of the ruling pashas. Indeed, the *ṣarrāf bāshī*, the chief banker of the pashalik, was by that very fact also the *nasi*.[161] He occupied the place of honor in the synagogue, led in the enactment of new communal statutes, had the right to mete out fines, and sometimes inflicted corporal punishment on transgressors. The dignity tended also, it would appear, to be quasi-hereditary in the same family.[162]

However, sometime after the destruction of the Mamlūks, the *nasi* was subordinated to a newly created *ḥakhām bāshī*, or chief rabbi, who received his appointment directly from the Sublime Porte[163] and now not only watched over the religious interests of the community, but also had overall control of its civil affairs.

Representing also the spiritual side in the nineteenth century were three principal rabbis who were vested by the community with the judicial power and held the title of *dayyanim*, that is, judges.[164] They decided on matters relating to marriage, divorce, the attestation of wills, and the like. In temporal affairs the *ḥakhām bāshī* and the *nasi* were assisted by ten notables known as *'Asarah nibharim* or the ten delegates.[165]

The lay council was empowered to levy taxes on the community and direct the expenditure of the proceeds. Its principal source of income was the *"ghābīlah"* or "gabelle," which had been enforced from antiquity, and

was a tax on meat. It owed its origin to the fact that sheep, after being slaughtered, had to be inspected by trained and specially authorized persons called *shoḥeṭs*, and that the *shoḥeṭs* had to be remunerated.[166] There were also other charges, such as the fee of ½ percent on the purchase of property and on mortgages, and the 2½ percent fee[167] on marriage contracts, which was probably collected by the ecclesiastical council.[168]

Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, the leaders of the community were also responsible for the payment of contributions due to the government which were known collectively as the *ʻaskariyyah*, or military tax. This in effect consisted of a capitation fee that every male member of twelve years of age and over had to pay annually,[169] presumably for exemption from military service. The number of Jewish contributors to the tax in A.H. 1308 (A.D. 1890-1891) was 2,483,[170] although the Jewish population of Baghdād at that time exceeded 50,000.[171] The responsibility for the collection of the tax belonged to the *ḥakhām bāshī*, but in the 1890s, owing to what appears to have been a revolt against the religious ruling element, the function passed into the hands of a lay tax collector.[172]

It is of interest that the Jewish religious leaders were often at the same time prominent merchants of the community. In 1846, for example, of the rabbis who were *dayyanim*, one, R. Eliahu ʻUbadiyyah, exported goods on a big scale by caravans. Another, R. ʻAbdullah, was one of the foremost merchants of Baghdād.[173] The profession of the third *dayyan* is not known.

The religious ruling element enjoyed a privileged status. Thus the *ḥakhamim*, that is, the rabbis and their sons, and the scribes and their sons, and other office-holders, were exempt from taxation.[174] This apparently contributed to the revolt against the *ḥakhām bāshī* in the 1890s. When the lay tax collector took over, the tax privileges were removed.[175]

By 1910 real power in the Jewish community had come to be concentrated in eight of its richest members–members merchants, three *ṣarrāfs*, one landholder, and one stockholder.[176] “The Chief Rabbi,” read a contemporary British report, “is under the influence of these persons and is, so to speak, a mere puppet in their hands.”[177]

Under the monarchy the role of the merchants and *ṣarrāfs* in the affairs of the community was, if anything, enhanced. There were, however, a number of formal changes. The *ḥakhām bāshī* was renamed *raʻīs-ul-ḥakhamim* and headed now a spiritual council of eight, and could

simultaneously hold the office of the presidency of the lay council, which consisted of ten members. Another apparent innovation was the election of the *raʿīs-ul-ḥakhamim*, the president, and the other members of the two councils by a General Council of sixty, of whom seven were rabbis. The law providing for the General Council did not specify how its members were to be chosen.[178]

The polarization of wealth noticed among other Iraqis also characterized the Jewish community. “Some of them are well-to-do but most of them are very poor,” wrote Texeira in the early seventeenth century.[179] More than two centuries later Denis de Rivoyre was to describe the quarter of the poor Jews in Baghdād as “the domain of misery in all its horror,” adding, however, that there were some among their coreligionists “whose fortune is enormous.”[180] In one Jewish document, long paragraphs are devoted to the enumeration of the various gold and silk ornaments that were owned by a bride of the wealthy family of Gabbai,[181] while we are told in an account on the same period that most of the Jews “were perpetually on the verge of starvation.”[182] A report prepared in 1910 for the British consulate estimated that wealthy merchants and *ṣarrāfs* formed 5 percent; petty traders, retail dealers, and employees of middling income 30 percent; poor people 60 percent; and professional beggars 5 percent of the Jews of Baghdād.[183]

The poverty of the most numerous class of Jews cannot, of course, be attributed to religious persecution: their condition was shared by the majority of Moslems. Occasionally there was arbitrariness–arbitrariness which, however, often all nonprivileged Iraqis, Moslems and non-Moslems alike, suffered. But on the whole in Baghdād the minorities enjoyed a rare tolerance.[184] The testimony of Rabbi Israel-Joseph Benjamin II in this regard is convincing enough. “No where else as at Baghdād,” he said in 1846, “have I found my coreligionists so completely free of that black anxiety, of that somber and taciturn mood that is the fruit of intolerance and persecution.”[185] A British report, written in 1910, conveyed much the same impression and added: “the Turks have all along regarded the Jews as very faithful subjects of the Sultan and have placed confidence in them.”[186] Similarly, under the monarchy they never received bad treatment from the government. In point of law, they were placed on the same footing as other citizens and, until the question of Palestine came to a climax in 1947–1948, did not suffer distress except in 1941, when authority broke down at

Baghdād, and acts of violence were perpetrated against them by migrant tribesmen from outlying areas; and even then, at their hour of danger, Moslems in their immediate neighborhood hurried to their assistance and gave shelter to their children and womenfolk.[187]

It is not without significance that, in their earliest phase and when they were still under the influence of racial theories, Arab nationalists or, at least some of them, considered the Jews of the Arab countries as an indivisible part of the Arab "race." "Arabs of the Christian and Jewish faith," appealed a Manifesto by the Arab Revolutionary Committee in 1915, two years before the Balfour Declaration, "join ranks with your Moslem brethren. Do not listen to those who say that they prefer the Turks without religion to Arabs of different beliefs; they are ignorant people who have no understanding of the vital interests of the race."[188]

In fact, the Jewish community of Iraq was thoroughly Arab, or if you prefer, Arabized. Its language was Arabic, Arabic being even used in its religious services. Its diet was Arab. Its superstitions were Arab superstitions, and so were its proverbs.[189] Many of its usages were those of the Arabs, even the harem forming part of its institutions.[190]

With regard to money, the *chalabīs*, as a class, were far and away weaker than the Jewish merchants. So much has already been made clear. It must now be added that in the nineteenth century and in the two decades before the founding of the monarchy, the *chalabīs* differed from the Jewish merchants in several other important respects.

In the first place, many of the *chalabīs* were intimately tied to the pastoral and seminomadic economy of the country. The traders in Arab horses, in sheep and camels, were invariably Moslems, although Jewish, Christian, and foreign merchants had a share in the trade of wool.[191] Of the prominent Arab families dealing in sheep were the Ghannāms and the Qaṣṣābs, in horses the Shawkats and the Mudallals, in camels the Ghannāms and the Bassāms.[192]

As could be expected, quite a few of the *chalabīs* descended from or were related to Arab tribal families. The Ghannāms had been the shaikhs of the military and commercial tribe of 'Ugail,[193] which in the early part of the nineteenth century alone enjoyed the right to conduct caravans across the Syrian desert.[194] The Qaṣṣābs issued from Shaikh Dar' of the tribe of

Jash‘am, who was one of the first to settle in the townlet of Rāwah on the upper Euphrates in the seventeenth century.[195] The Shawkats were connected by marriage to the Lahīb, a section of the Jubūr tribe.[196] The Mudallals were from the Banī Tamīm.[197] So were also the Bassāms, who traced their origin to a shaikh of ‘Anaizah, capital of al-Qaṣīm, a province of Najd.[198] Similarly, the Qashṭīnīs, who had large investments in the commerce between Najd, Iraq, and Syria, descended from the leaders of the tribe of Āl-‘Īsa;[199] and the ‘Abd-ul-Wāḥids, who had a foothold in Baṣrah’s date trade, from the Banī Arai’ house of the Banī Khālid.[200]

Another characteristic that marked off some of the *chalabīs* from the Jewish merchants was their closer links with the local industry. This group was the more specifically Iraqi among the *chalabīs*.[201] Trading in silk fabrics-and silk weaving was one of the most important industries of Iraq in the nineteenth century–century, among others, the families of Mulūkī, Kubbah, Baghdādī, and Zubair.[202] They sold such things as *izars*, silk cloaks worn by women; and *‘abā’as*, silken or woolen mantles, embroidered with silk or gold. The Kubbahs dealt also in broadcloth. The Marayātīs, as their name indicates, traded in mirrors.[203] One old family that inherited from ancestors the art of making crystal provided retailers with cups, vases, pitchers, bracelets, and various sorts of glasses.[204] Other families, like the Raḥḥāls,[205] owned river and ocean-going sailing ships, and were thus linked to the shipbuilding that was carried on at Hīt, Sūq-ish-Shuyūkh, Baṣrah, and other places. Obviously, these families and the families trading in horses and camels suffered from the revolution in the means of transport, as heavily as the *chalabīs* trading in local textiles suffered from the outpouring of the Lancashire and Bombay cotton goods.

Of course, the Jewish merchants were not entirely unconnected with Iraq’s manufactures and handicrafts: they had in their hands part of the trade relating to metal working in gold and silver, as well as the trade in *aghabānī*, a new product which was woven and embroidered with *shahrī*, a kind of Indian silk, and which flourished in the latter part of the nineteenth century.[206]

The *chalabīs* were also more closely related to the land than the Jewish merchants. Owing to the unsettled conditions in the countryside and the inability of the government to provide protection, the Jews, as a body, did not speculate in land in the nineteenth century and prior to the British

occupation. There were, however, exceptions. For example, Manāhim Daniel and other members of his family, who belonged to the "élite" of Baghdād Jewish society, owned large tracts of country round Ḥillah, in the Nāṣiriyyah district, and on the Gharrāf.[207] Their holdings were said in 1910 to be worth about 400,000 Turkish pounds.[208] Eliahu Dannus, the banker of the British Residency for thirty years, and Shaūl Sha'shū'ah, an important *ṣarrāf,* had considerable immovable property in and around Baghdād. Sha'shū'ah owned real estate also at Baṣrah and Karbalā'.[209] Moreover, the period immediately following the conquest of the country by Britain was marked by a vigorous advance in the acquisition of landed and house property by Jews and Christians, at least in Baṣrah. The relevant accompanying Table 9-7 is self-explanatory. There are no comparable figures for other provinces or for subsequent years. According to the British political officer of Baṣrah, the marked increase in Christian and Jewish holdings was "in keeping with the political situation,"[210] It was also apparently induced by a general expectation of a rapid rise in the price of property. All the same, the links of the Jewish merchants with the land remained relatively weak, and their role in the date and grain trade rather modest: in 1936, out of 104 concerns exporting dates, only 15 were Jewish,[211] H and out of 79 concerns exporting or dealing wholesale in grain, only 11 were Jewish[212]–and none of these was of major significance. The Moslem concerns numbered 57 and 43, respectively.

TABLE 9-7

Value of Property Sold in Baṣrah Division in 1917 and 1918

(in rupees)

	1917	1918
Agricultural land[a]		
To Moslems	26,92,510	15,27,899
To Jews	1,07,561	7,63,525
To Christians	1,31,659	6,67,177
Buildings[a]		
To Moslems	3,69,883	11,03,375
To Jews	3,41,980	12,80,014
To Christians	39,782	2,59,300
Population of Basrah Division in 1919[b]		
Moslems	154,902	
Jews	6,928	
Christians	2,221	

Source:

[a]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, pp. 241-242.

[b]A. T. Wilson, *Loyalties, Mesopotamia 1914-1917* (London, 1930), p. 236.

One other thing about the *chalabīs* that needs to be noted was the non-Iraqi origin of many of them. For example, the Charchafchīs were from Persia, the Shāhbandars, Pāchachīs, and Qashṭīnīs from Syria, and the families of Zaibaq, Ghannām, Ṣāliḥ, Thanayān, ʻAssāfī, Bassām, Mandīl, Zuhair, and ʻAbd-ul-Wāḥid from Najd.[213] All of which goes to show how important was the transit trade in the past. That there were so many Najdites among the *chalabīs* appears to point also to the centrality of the pastoral and bedouin economy in Arab commerce. The same facts reflect, in addition, the freedom of economic movement in the Near East in the nineteenth and earlier centuries, and suggest that the absence of political boundaries more than compensated for the shaikhly exactions and the numerous internal duties. Frontierless conditions also enabled some of the *chalabīs* to operate commercially on a Near Eastern scale, or at least in more than one Arab country. The Bassāms, for example, had interests and business branches in Iraq, Syria, Najd, and Ḥijāz.[214] It is to this segment of the *chalabīs*, and in particular the Mosulites among them who had very active relations with Syria, that the partition of the Ottoman Empire and the hindrances of the new frontiers proved most damaging.

In the present chapter we have not, up to this point, gone beyond the first two decades of this century, except where it was necessary to round out the discussion of a course of events already fully developed, or only insofar as

the bringing in of statistical evidence of a later period made it easier to understand preceding trends. Attention will now be concentrated on features in the life of the mercantile class specific to the time of the monarchy, that is, to the years from 1921 to 1958.

Save for the contraction of the Mosul trade stemming from the partition of the Arab lands, the shock of the world-wide depression of 1929–1931, the drying up of the Persian entrepôt market, and the consequences of other passing crises, the monarchic era was on the whole an era of growth and upward mobility for the trading people. Signs to this effect are not lacking. The number of traders with yearly incomes of more than 150 dīnārs rose from 1862 in 1932-1933 to 5,445 in 1942-1943.[215] Part of the increase, however, was not real, and could be explained by the decline in the purchasing power of the dīnār. But that there was expansion and that it continued, particularly after 1953, is indubitable, despite the mass departure from Iraq of Jewish merchants. In 1955 retail shops numbered no fewer than 36,062, and wholesale establishments 1,576. Their 1956 annual turnover, partly estimated, amounted to 82.6 and 53.6 million dīnārs, respectively.[216] From the aspect of the national product, the estimated value added by them and by hawkers, street sellers, and open-air markets increased from 17.3 million dīnārs in 1953 to 28.8 million dīnārs in 1957 at current prices.[217] To the strengthening of the economic position of the mercantile (and other moneyed) elements points also the dramatic rise shown below in the number and capital (in dīnārs) of Iraqi private,[218] collective,[219] and public limited stock[220] companies:[221]

Year	*Private companies with limited liability*		*Collective companies*		*Public limited stock companies*	
	No.	*Capital*	*No.*	*Capital*	*No.*	*Capital*
1929	17	751,350	24	172,328	5	88,125
1936	38	919,725	212	1,026,055	6	138,125
1957	411	21,321,277	374	5,708,603	63	26,367,500

Another significant pointer was the increase of the “first-class” members of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce from 13 in 1927–1928 to 190 in 1957–1958, and of the Chamber’s entire membership from 288 to 2,812 in the same period (refer to Table 9-8). But some of this increase must be attributed to the tendency of the government to confine all buying and

selling during World War II and import and export activities in the postwar period to the merchants belonging to chambers of commerce.[222]

What causal explanations could be offered for this upward trend in mercantile fortunes? A complex interplay of diverse factors was clearly involved.

For one thing, as is plain from the figures just quoted, the Iraqi merchants abandoned their old distrust of cooperative enterprise, and increased their power of economic organization. But this is really a subsidiary causative circumstance.

TABLE 9-8

Members of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce in Selected Years[a]

Financial year	First class	Second class	Third class	Fourth class	Fifth class	Sixth class	Total
1927-28	13	25	67	69	114	–	288
1938-39	25	22	84	130	162	75	498
1943-44	59	173	481	–	1,896[b]	–	2,609
1948-49	156	300	668	1,032	290	10	2,456
1957-58	190	315	1,317	961	28	1	2,812

[a]Up to 1943 the "financial consideration" of the members of each class was defined by the maximum limits shown in Table 93. In 1943 the term "financial capacity" was substituted for "financial consideration," but without alteration of criteria, and the maximum limits for the various classes were redefined as follows: first class: 100,000 dīnārs; second class: 30,000 dīnārs; third class: 10,000 dīnārs; fourth class: 2,500 dīnārs; fifth class: 500 dīnārs; and sixth class: 100 dīnārs.

[b]This is the total of the membership of the fourth, fifth, and sixth classes.

Source: Baghdād Chamber of Commerce, *Annual Reports* for 1935-36, p. 17; for *1948–49*, pp. 29-30; and for *1957–58*, p. 10.

More important were the opportunities that attended the First and Second World Wars. The presence of large bodies of troops, that is, of a ready market for existing produce, the inevitable scarcities, the holding up of grain and profiteering, the stream of speculations, and the abrupt and rapid rise of prices and rents led to a redistribution of incomes and to easy and concentrated amassing of private capital.

The considerable increase in monarchic days of the areas under cultivation and of the exportable agricultural surplus also helped the process of monetary accumulation: the weight and value of the average yearly export of dates rose from 151,800 tons and 1.5 million dīnārs in 1919-1925

to 240,000 tons and 3.5 million dīnārs in 1952-1958; and of barley from 50,500 tons and .2 million dīnārs to 343,700 tons and 6.5 million dīnārs in the same years.[223] But here again the depreciation of the currency accounts for part of the rise in the exports' nominal value.

Another stimulus was provided by the improvement in the conditions of transport and travel. In 1927-1928 the total railway kilometrage stood at 1,503, in 1957-1958 at 2,048. Thanks to the expansion of all-weather and earthen roads, the number of lorries and pickups rose from almost nothing in 1917 to 437 in 1927, and 11,594 in 1957.[224] Nonetheless, the available traffic arteries scarcely answered the needs of the economy.

The progress of the merchants was also causally linked to the fact that they were not overburdened fiscally. Indeed, from 1917 to 1927 they paid no income tax whatever and, except for a small charge on their dwelling houses, made no direct contribution to the treasury. True, they may have been indirectly affected by the customs and excise duties, which accounted for a large proportion of the public revenue–22.1 percent in fiscal 1918 and 46.5 percent in fiscal 1927[225]–but which were really levies on the people as a whole, inasmuch as their weight fell upon articles of general consumption.[226] The income tax law eventually introduced–introduced No. 52 of 1927–provided for taxation at the trifling flat rate of 3.6 percent on incomes exceeding 300 dīnārs.[227] Between 1927 and 1956, there were several legal changes which brought higher tax rates, increasingly graduated scales, and an "excess profit tax" or "income surtax."[228] As ultimately consolidated, under a law passed in 1956, tax rates, after certain exemptions, ranged from 3 percent on the first 500 dīnārs to 40 percent on incomes over 8,000 dīnārs for resident individual merchants, and from 10 percent on the first 1,000 dīnārs to 30 percent on amounts above 4,000 dīnārs for incorporated firms.[229] Nevertheless, all along the contributions of the merchants added up to but a tiny fraction of the total public revenue.[230] Moreover, it was an open secret that they seldom paid their due share. They were well educated in tax evasion and the manipulation of revenue officials. From the accounts that many presented, it was simply not possible to arrive at their actual profits. As one poignant saying had it, the merchants kept three different books, one for themselves, one for their partners, and one for the government.[231]

Most decisive in the ascent of the merchants, however, was the vast flow of oil money after 1951, which brought expansion to many a trade, created new and undreamt-of chances, set in motion capital development schemes, and pyramided the wealth of a growing number of mercantile families.

Other and not unrelated circumstances were also at play: the advance of town life, the rising standard of living of the more fortunately situated elements of the population, and the increasing demand for housing, goods, and amenities.

But if the merchants were accumulating wealth, the rate of their accumulation was not as rapid as they themselves desired, mainly because the bulk of the population–population peasants–peasants in a very retarded state and having a low spending power, still lay largely outside the web of commercial life.

Moreover, the mode of growth of the trading class, if beneficial to itself, was not salutary to the people at large. Not only was much of the new-found wealth being concentrated in a comparatively small number of families,[232] but a great portion of the trade carried on was adding very little to the intrinsic productive power of the country: from 1926 to 1945 consumer goods accounted for almost two-thirds, from 1946 to 1951 for 55.6 percent, and from 1952 to 1958 for 49.1 percent of the value of all imports.[233]

At the same time, the lion's share of the economic benefits generated, directly or ultimately, by oil and by trade was finding its way into the bank accounts of foreign firms. As is clear from Table 9-9, in the years for which figures are obtainable, the net earnings of tax-paying foreign companies–companies the oil companies–companies outpaced the net earnings of their Iraqi counterparts, running higher at the least by one-fifth, as in the fiscal year 1951, and at one point–point fiscal 1944–by as much as 151 percent. On their side, the oil companies earned in the second half of the fifties an average yearly net profit of 62 percent on their investments,[234] and swept forward to a net income exceeding that of all the Iraqi retailers, wholesalers, bankers, and manufacturers combined.[235]

TABLE 9-9

Income of Iraqi and Foreign Companies (Excluding Oil Companies) 1944-45-1952-53

(in 1000's of dīnārs)

Year	Nationality of companies	No. of tax-paying companies	Taxable income	Income tax[a] and surtax[b]	Net profit	Net profit of foreign cos. as % of that of Iraqi cos.
1944-45	Iraqi	40	602	213	389	
	Foreign	66	1,580	602	978	251%
1945-46	Iraqi	75	1,213	453	760	
	Foreign	86	1,680	684	996	131%
1946-47	Iraqi	26	733	279	454	
	Foreign	68	1,147	434	713	157%
1947-48	Iraqi	34	813	259	554	
	Foreign	94	1,187	488	699	126%
1948-49	Iraqi	70	753	270	483	
	Foreign	95	1,440	542	898	186%
1949-50	Iraqi	?	?	286	?	
	Foreign	?	?	417	?	?
1950-51	Iraqi	76	607	232	375	
	Foreign	87	1,127	412	715	191%
1951-52	Iraqi	57	760	263	497	
	Foreign	97	940	346	594	120%
1952-53	Iraqi	51	1,160	425	735	
	Foreign	83	1,513	562	951	129%

[a]Until 1955 tax was charged, under Income Tax Law No. 36 of 1939, at the rate of 15 percent upon the taxable income of any body of persons.

[b]Under Income Surtax Law No. 63 of 1943, which remained in force until 1955, the surtax was collected on that part of the income of companies which was liable to the income tax and was in excess of 1,500 dīnārs. Its rate was as low as 10 percent on any excess amount up to 1,000 dīnārs, and as high as 25 percent on any excess amount over 3,000 dīnārs.

Source: The table is based on the provisions of the tax laws and on data in Iraq's *Statistical Abstracts* for 1946, p. 196; for 1948, p. 232; for 1949, p. 265; for 1951, p. 303; for 1953, p. 155; and for 1955, p. 127. For the provisions of the tax laws, see Iraq, *Compilations of Laws... (1/1/1939-31/12/1939)* (Baghdād, 1941), pp. 73 ff.; and Kāḍhim as-Sa'īdī, *At-Tashrī-ul-Mālī fī-l-'Irāq. Aḍ-Darā'ib* ("Fiscal Legislation in Iraq. The Taxes") (Baghdād, 1962), pp. 33-35.

These facts point to another basic feature of monarchic times: the continued advance of foreign economic influence. From only 37 in 1928-1929, the number of foreign companies–companies than those concerned with crude oil extraction–extraction by 1957-1958 grown to 225. The nature of their activity is set forth below. Of the 225 companies, 96 were of British nationality (see Table 9-10), and enjoyed the juiciest proportion of monetary returns. From 1950 to 1958, the Imperial Chemical Industries alone netted a total of 1,524,126 dīnārs, or a yearly average of 169,347

dīnārs on a paid-up capital in Iraq of only 3,000 dīnārs. Another British firm, the machine-importing Birch, Marr & Co., realized in 1957 a clear profit of 191,864 dīnārs on a paid-up capital of merely 10,000.[238] The pattern was unmistakable: on the one hand, except in the case of the oil concerns, there was in the fifties relatively little foreign investment tied up in Iraq; on the other hand, surplus earnings were flowing out of the country in copious measure.

Year	Banking	Manufacturing	Transport	Trading	Insurance	Construction	Total
1928/29[236]	3	6	4	21	3	–	37
1957/58[237]	9	14	36	48	64	54	225

Save during the brief interval of military rule (1936–1941), the British had all along been extending and deepening their trading interests by turning to advantage their privileged political position and bringing to bear every local lever of power to which they had access. The British "Mandate," to be sure, came formally to an end in 1932, but British economic influence continued to be pervasive. Writing confidentially to the British Foreign Office in 1934, British Ambassador F. Humphrys observed:

> The foreign commercial interests in Iraq are, owing to the existence of the British connexion, predominantly British.... The greater part of the country's foreign trade is carried in British ships. The foreign capital sunk in the country is almost exclusively British. Two out of three banks are entirely British, including the Eastern Bank, which handles all the government cash; the capital of the third bank, the Ottoman, is about one-third British and has a number of British directors. All important insurance business is in the hands of British firms. In another sphere of activity, the Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Co. is a long-established British company, linked to the British India Steamship Co., operating, with but one native competitor, river transport on the Tigris between Baṣrah and Baghdād. It owns a fleet of 18 steamers and has about £250,000 invested in Iraq. In every direction, despite the intense Japanese competition, British commercial influence remains paramount.[239]

TABLE 9-10

Number, Nationality, and Capital of Foreign Companies Operating in Iraq in 1957-1958 (Excluding Oil Companies)

Nationality of company	Number	Capital as registered in country of origin (in dīnārs)*	Observations
British	96	386,303,206	
French	24	28,912,619	Capital of 23 companies only
American	22	23,583,025	Capital of 16 companies only
Dutch	4	19,664,809	
Swiss	5	15,800,000	
German	15	10,261,085	Capital of 12 companies only
Turkish	1	10,000,000	
Italian	5	9,209,190	
Belgian	6	5,923,215	Capital of 4 companies only
Pakistani	1	4,511,280	
Lebanese	12	3,575,060	
Swedish	3	3,455,172	
Hong Kong	2	3,000,000	
Jordanian	6	2,407,000	Capital of 5 companies only
Canadian	2	1,090,000	
Tunisian, Moroccan, and Algerian	4	839,000	
Egyptian	2	300,000	
Greek	1	238,095	
Japanese	2	200,000	
Cypriote	2	200,000	
Syrian	1	100,000	
Bahama Islands	2	65,000	
Bermudan	1	25,000	
Iranian	2	18,868	Capital of 1 company only
Norwegian	1	15,000	
Indian	3	(not available)	
Total	225		

*Figures on the yearly turnover of the companies in Iraq would have been more indicative of the scale of their activities, but access to the government files containing such figures was not possible.

Source: Figures obtained from the Federation of Iraqi Industries through the courtesy of Dr. Ṭal'at ash-Shaibānī, ex-secretary of the Federation and minister of development under Qāsim.

More than that, the Iraq railways were then British-owned and under British executive control. Out of this, as could be imagined, arose "numerous

advantages" to British industry. Besides, the 242 British officials who were at that time in the employ of the Iraq government were not only drawing £250,000 annually in salaries and remitting part of this amount to England for investment, but "their connexion with the Government," in the words of the same British envoy, "usually results in orders being placed with British firms" whenever government requirements had to be purchased abroad. The mission of British officers attached to the local armed forces, supported by appropriate provisions of the "Treaty of Alliance," fulfilled a similar function when it came to the arming and equipping of Iraq's army and air force.

Of course, by the last decade of the monarchy the picture had changed somewhat. The British were no longer as preponderant in the financial field as they had been in the thirties. The Iraq government had developed monetary institutions of its own: in 1936 it established the Agricultural Bank;[240] in 1941 the Rāfidain, a commercial bank; in 1946 the Industrial Bank; and in 1947 the Central Bank. This in addition to the financial houses created by local men of capital. The railways had also since 1936 become national property, and from 1952 were fully under Iraqi control. Moreover, in 1951 the British Euphrates and Tigris Steam Navigation Co. (Lynch Bros.) went out of business, due to the dwindling of river traffic, and in 1952 Andrew Weir & Co. abandoned a monopoly for packed date exports which they had held since 1939. On the other hand, the dīnār was still chained to sterling, and the British had not yet lost their foremost place in the commerce of Iraq, providing, as they did, in 1946-1951 42.9 percent, and in 1952-1958 31.2 percent of all its imports.[241] British companies of all kinds were also sweeping on a tide of oil to earnings hitherto unequaled. Most important of all, the oil concerns-which, if nominally one-fourth British, were under effective British management–management become the first and most crucial factor in the economic life of the country.

There were other significant developments in the monarchic period. One was the change in the circumstances and composition of the local mercantile class occasioned by the exodus of the Jews in the late forties and early fifties. The Moslem element, it is true, had since 1921 been gradually rising to a greater role in commerce, but the relative weight of the Jews, if decreasing, had continued to be considerable, especially in the money-lending field. Before 1947 Moslem traders–traders at or near the top

excepted–excepted difficulty securing loans from foreign banks and, as the recently founded Rāfidain was still handicapped by a shortage of funds, they more often than not turned for credit to the Jewish *ṣarrāfs*, whose lending rate was two or more points higher.[242] With the departure of this class and of almost all of the Jewish men of business, and the attendant abrupt flight from Iraq of at least ten million dīnārs, the money market was bound to be depressed. Buying and selling also noticeably slowed down. But the crisis was short lived. Before long, the government, floating on oil, stepped in, becoming the principal source of mercantile credit. In trade proper the vacuum was largely filled by Shī'ī men of capital who by the mid-fifties occupied the dominant positions in the cloth and wheat markets of Baghdād. The Baghdād Chamber of Commerce came also under their control: in fiscal 1935 they had only two out of eighteen seats on the Chamber's Administrative Committee, but in fiscal 1957, fourteen out of the eighteen seats belonged to them (see Table 9-11). However, the Sunnī merchants retained the preponderant interest which they had all along possessed in the sheep and wool market.

Another noteworthy development was the appearance from among the richer or more enterprising merchant families of a new class of manufacturers. By and large, their energies were directed toward the production of consumer goods such as textiles, beverages, soap, vegetable oil, and cigarettes; or of building material such as cement, concrete, bricks, and tiles. Measures or conditions which the government brought about, even if half-heartedly, helped to put them on their feet: guaranteed markets or preference in state contracts for some factories; complete or partial exemptions, for limited periods and under certain circumstances, from the income tax, property tax, and customs import duties by virtue of Laws for the Encouragement of Industrial Undertakings No. 14 of 1929, No. 43 of 1951, and No. 72 of 1955; tariff protection after 1933 from between 11 and 27 percent *ad valorem* and, in rare instances, above these rates and up to 50 percent; loans from the Industrial Bank on relatively easy terms; and, finally, in the fifties, direct participation by the state in private industrial enterprises. Critical antithetical factors were the scarcity of skilled labor, the lack of experience and technical knowledge, the dumping of competitive imports at reduced prices, and a domestic market limited by the low income of the mass of the people.[243] All the same, by 1957 the amount invested by

Iraqi companies in industry had, as is clear from Table 9-12, reached 27.2 million dīnārs, exceeding the corporate capital invested in commerce, which added up to only 20.7 million dīnārs. An additional sum of 5.3 million dīnārs was committed to mixed industrial-commercial ventures.

TABLE 9-11

Composition of the Administrative Committee of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce in Selected Years

Year	Total membership of committee	No. of Arab Sunnīs	No. of Arab Shī'īs	No. of Kurds	No. of Jews	No. of Christians	No. of British
1935-36	18	4	2	1	9	–	2
1948-49	18	4	6	1	7	–	–
1950-51	18	6	9	1	2	–	–
1957-58	18	4	14	–	–	–	–

Source: Baghdād Chamber of Commerce, *Annual Reports* for 1935–36, p. 14; for 1948–49, p. 25; for 1950–51, p. 9; and for 1957–58, p. 10.

A number of characteristics distinguished the new manufacturing element. First, it consisted predominantly of Sunnī families. The reason is easy to discern. Sunnī men of capital, being more closely connected than moneyed Shī'īs with the existing state structure, had on the whole less difficulty in securing from the government the legislative or financial assistance upon which the progress of factories so much depended and, therefore, were less averse to the long-run investments that industry required. However, Shī'īs were prominent in flour milling at Baghdād and in the mid-Euphrates, perhaps because of their strong foothold in the grain trade of central and southern Iraq.

The predominance of the Sunnīs in the manufacturing field found expression in the composition of the Administrative Council of the Federation of Industries: out of the thirteen full members, representing the private industrial sector in fiscal 1956, the year of the founding of the Federation, ten were Sunnīs, the Shī'īs numbering only three.[244]

Another salient feature of the manufacturing element was the high degree of concentration of its wealth. Not only were industrial companies fewer in number and more capitalized than commercial companies (consult Table 9-

12), but often the same families had controlling shares of stock in several and sometimes functionally unrelated enterprises. This was true, however, also of the bigger commercial families. Moreover, it would be a mistake to draw too sharp a line between manufacturers, merchants, bankers, and owners of real estate or agricultural land, because of tie-ins or interlocking or, more simply, because the same individual or family occupied, not infrequently, positions in different branches of the economy.

TABLE 9-12

Iraqi Corporate Industrial and Commercial Capital in Fiscal 1957[a]

(in dīnārs)

Nature of companies[b]	*Industrial capital*		*Commercial capital*		*Mixed industrial commercial capital*	
	No. of companies	*Capital*	*No. of companies*	*Capital*	*No. of companies*	*Capital*
Public limited stock companies	46	17,662,500	12	5,905,000	5	2,800,000
Private companies with limited liability	122	8,516,040	259	10,726,736	30	2,078,501
Collective companies	70	1,069,351	288	4,165,252	16	474,000
Total	238	27,247,891	559	20,796,988	51	5,352,501

[a]The table does not include amounts invested in individual or state enterprises.

[b]For definitions of the different types of companies mentioned in this column, see notes 218, 219, 220 of this chapter.

Source: Figures obtained from the Federation of Iraqi Industries through the courtesy of Dr. Ṭal‘at ash-Shaibānī, ex-secretary of the federation.

All this emerges very plainly from Table 9-13, which lists the Iraqi bourgeois families worth a million or more dīnārs in 1958. These, according to our information, numbered 23, of whom 8 were Arab Sunnī, 7 Arab Shī‘ī, 1 Kurdish Sunnī, 1 Turkish Sunnī, 1 Jewish, 3 Christian Arab, and 2 Christian Armenian. Seventeen were Baghdādis, 3 Mosulites, 2 from Baṣrah, and 1 from Ḥillah. None of the Baghdādis–dis Lāwī family excepted–excepted two decades earlier ranked as “first class” members of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce, that is, members whose “financial consideration” ranged between 22,500 and 75,000 dīnars[245]–an unambiguous evidence of the rapid rate of capital accumulation and of economic mobility in the forties and fifties. Between them, the 23 families held, on a conservative estimate, 30 to 35 million dīnārs in assets of all sorts, that is, an amount equaling, in rough terms, 56 to 65 percent of the

entire private corporate commercial and industrial capital.[246] Such was the magnitude of the concentration of bourgeois wealth in Iraq on the eve of the 1958 Revolution.[247]

What weight did the owners of commercial, industrial, and financial capital have politically? Did they possess any power of leverage in the state structure or over the people? It is scarcely possible to answer these questions meaningfully without keeping in mind a number of features which inhered in the contemporary historical situation.

In the first place, for the better part of the period extending from the destruction of the Mamlūks in 1831 to the collapse of the monarchy in 1958, the government at Baghdād did not have its basic *point d'appui* in local social forces. The crucial political decisions were made by non-Iraqis or outside the country's frontiers. In this lies the key explanation for the fact that there was often no close correspondence between the local distribution of wealth and the local distribution of power.

Second, the men of capital did not form a homogeneous or stable class. They were divided not only, with respect to status, into mainly *chalabīs* and *nouveaux riches*, or, from the religious or sectarian aspect, into Sunnīs, Shī'īs, Jews, and Christians; but more importantly, from an economic standpoint, into elements whose predominant interests were intrinsically *compatible*, and elements whose predominant interests were intrinsically *incompatible*, with British economic penetration, or, from still another angle of perception–perception of mobility–mobility elements that were rising and elements that were sinking down. Indeed, throughout the period just referred to, they acted together politically only once–once 1909 when the Ottoman Cabinet approved a scheme that would in effect have led to the absorption of the government river navigation service by Messrs. Lynch and the reestablishment of this family's old monopoly over the country's principal trade channel. The Cabinet had acted under British pressure: "I consider," Sir Edward Grey had written to the British ambassador in Isṭanbūl, "that it would be an unfriendly act and fatal to British trade in Mesopotamia, if the Turkish Government were to give a concession to a company, whether Turkish or foreign, for navigation on the Euphrates and Tigris, financed by other than British capital. I leave it to your discretion to warn the Porte in this sense should you think fit or should affairs become

critical."[248] News of the scheme threw Baghdādi merchants of every coloring into a "feeling amounting to consternation."[249] Moslems, Jews, and Christians, making common cause, joined in public protests and, by telegram, warned Isṭanbūl that, in the absence of competition, river freight and fares would be increased, that the steamers' service might be manipulated so as to assure an advantage to British over other commerce, that "political designs might be pushed [by the British] under cover of trade," and that concessions for river navigation should be granted only to Ottoman merchants.[250] Sassoon Ḥasqail, a Jewish financier and a deputy for Baghdād, journeyed from Baṣrah up the Tigris, arousing the local traders and notables to the dangers that the scheme could bring.[251] Even one of the smaller British firms appealed to the British consul general to be "so good as to take steps to protect us as independent British merchants, against the possible operations of this monopoly."[252] In the coffee-houses it would soon be said that three members of the Turkish Cabinet had taken from Lynch Brothers a bribe of 50,000 Turkish pounds. In the meantime, the agitation at Baghdād rose to such a pitch that businessmen, led by the prominent Moslem merchants Maḥmūd Shāhbandar and 'Abd-ul-Qāder al-Khuḍairī, and supported by a considerable crowd, literally occupied the telegraph building and insisted that the prime minister come to the telegraph office at Isṭanbūl and discuss the concession with them directly. Four days later, despite reassuring messages from the premier, they were still "practically inhabiting" the building. By that time the *wālī*[253] himself had taken their side: pleading that there was "great popular excitement," he had recommended to the premier that the demands of the merchants be conceded.[254] In the end, the Turkish Cabinet resigned, perhaps not solely on account of the policy it pursued in the matter of the concession; but the scheme, at any rate, fell through. The whole episode illustrates in an unequivocal manner how a class, threatened in its vital interests, quickly coheres, regardless of the diversity of its elements or of differences in its religious beliefs.

TABLE 9-13

Iraqi Capitalists Worth a Million or More Dīnārs in 1958

Name of family	Ethnic origin, religion, and sect	Class of membership in Baghdād Chamber of Commerce in 1938	Maximum limit of "financial consideration"[a] of class of membership in 1938 (in dīnārs)	Main place of activity in 1958	Nature of business or of assets in 1958
Fattāḥ (Nūrī and Sulaimān)	Arab[b] Sunnī	Second	22,500	Baghdād	Proprietors of textile factory (Fattāḥ Pasha Spinning and Weaving Co., capital 600,000 dīnārs); among main shareholders in United Cement Co. (capital 2,250,000 dīnārs), Iraq Cement Co. (capital 1,750,000 dīnārs), Commercial Bank of Iraq (capital 1,000,000 dīnārs), Vegetable Oil Extraction Co. (capital 750,000 dīnārs), Asbestos Industries Co. (capital 300,000 dīnārs), Manṣur Construction Co. (capital 300,000 dīnārs), and Ahliyyah Tobacco Co. (capital 200,000 dīnārs). One member of the family—Nūrī—was chairman of the Board of Directors of the Commercial Bank of Iraq, another—Sulaimān—the president of the Federation of Iraqi Industries
Chalabī ('Abd-ul-Hādī and Muḥammad 'Alī)	Arab Shī'ī	Third	7,500	Baghdād	Owners of a flour mill and of urban real estate; land speculators; grain merchants; ex-agents of Andrew Weir & Co. (a British concern which between 1939 and 1952 enjoyed a strong position in the barley trade and a monopoly for packed date exports); proprietors of al-Hādī town, northwest of Baghdād, and of the modern large-scale agricultural estate of Laṭīfiyyah, south of Baghdād; among principal shareholders in Middle Iraq Dates Co. (capital 1,000,000 dīnārs), Rāfidain Milling and Trading Co. (capital 250,000 dīnārs), Date Industries Co. (capital 100,000 dīnārs), as well as in Iraq Cement Co. and United Cement Co. One member of the family, Muḥammad 'Alī, was manager of the government's Rāfidain Bank and in the fifties wielded "dictatorial power on Bank Street"
Garibian (Simon)	Armenian Christian	—[c]	—[c]	Baṣrah and Baghdād	Importer of timber and iron (nicknamed in the twenties as the "King of Iron"); proprietor and manager of Simon Garibian & Co. (capital 250,000 dīnārs); a main shareholder in Cotton Seeds Products Co. (capital 1,000,000 dīnārs); part-owner of Khayyām Cinema (capital 30,000 dīnārs); and agent, among other things, of "Craven A" cigarettes, Lux soap, and Voglander cameras
Dāmirchī (Muḥammad, Ismā'īl, and Ḥamīd)[d]	Arab Shī'īte			Baghdād	Proprietors of two flour mills, agricultural lands, and urban real estate; owners of Dāmirchī Co. (capital 60,000 dīnārs); among main shareholders in Date Industries Co. and in the Commer- Bank of Iraq; and agents of International Harvester, Ford Motor Co., and R.C.A. One member of the family, 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, served as executive director of the Commercial Bank of Iraq and another, Muḥammad, as member of the Administrative Committee of the Central Bank

Khuḍairī (Nājī and ʿAbd-ul-Munʿim)	Arab Sunnī	Third	7,500	Baghdād and Baṣrah	Exporters of grain, contractors, owners of real estate, proprietors of ʿAbd-ul-Munʿim al-Khuḍairī River Transport Steamship Co. (capital 70,000 dīnārs) and of the Iraqi Brewery Co. (capital 474,000 dīnārs); and among main shareholders in Iraq Cement Co.
Mirjān (ʿAbd-ur-Razzāq and ʿAbd-ul-Wahhāb)[f]	Arab Shīʿī			Ḥillah	Contractors and proprietors of wheat-mill, agricultural lands, and urban real estate. Among main shareholders of the Euphrates Cement Co. (capital 2,000,000 dīnārs)
Ṣābūnjī	Arab Sunnī	—[g]	—[g]	Mosul	Owners of urban real estate and agricultural lands; general contractors; exporters of grain, gall-nuts, wool, hides, and skins; and among main shareholders in Iraqi Cement Co.
Lutfī (ʿAbdullah)[h]	Kurd Sunnī			Baghdād	Proprietor and manager of Rāfidain Tobacco and Cigarette Co. (capital 200,000 dīnārs)
Yūnis (al-Ḥājj Hāshim)	Arab Sunnī	—[i]	—[i]	Mosul	Grain merchant and proprietor of a textile plant (al-Ḥājj Yūnis Weaving Co., capital 300,000 dinars)
Ibrāhīm (al-Ḥājj Ṣāliḥ)[j]	Turk Sunnī	Third	7,500	Baghdād	Owner of a textile factory and of urban real estate and main shareholder in Flannels and Hosiery Weaving Co. (capital 32,000 dīnārs)
Markarian (Iskandar Stefān)	Armenian Christian	Third	7,500	Baghdād	Importer of machinery and exporter of grain; owner of farm in Kūt province; part owner of Khayyām Cinema and Khayyām Hotel; and a main shareholder in Baghdād Bakery (capital 130,000 dīnārs) and in Cottonseed Products Co. (capital 1,000,000 dīnārs)
Ḥanna ash-Ṣhaikh (Mikhaīl)	Arab Christian	—[k]	—[k]	Baṣrah	Proprietor of *dūbas*, cargo boats plying Iraq's rivers between Baṣrah and Baghdād
Lāwī[l] (Khaḍḍūrī and Ezra)	Jewish	First	75,000	Baghdād	Proprietors of Khaddūrī and Ezra Mīr Lāwī Co. (capital 275,000 dīnārs), dealers in real estate, contractors, and agents for Chevrolet, Buick, Goodyear tires, General Motors trucks, Frigidaire, and Mobiloil lubricants
Baghdādī (ʿAbd-ul-ʿAzīz)	Arab Shīʿī			Baghdād	Proprietor and manager of the Iraq Tobacco and Cigarette Factory; owner of urban real estate; and among main shareholders of the National Leather-making Co. (capital 175,000 dīnārs).
Baḥoshi	Arab Christian	Second	22,500	Baghdād	Proprietors of Rāfidain Brick Factory; importers, among other things, of centrifugal pumps and agricultural implements; and owners of urban real estate
Ḥasso	Arab Christian	Second	22,500	Baghdād	Proprietors of real estate and of one of Baghdād's biggest department stores, Ḥasso Brothers (capital 120,000 dīnārs)
Maḥmūd[m] (ʿAbd-uj-Jabbār)	Arab Sunnī			Baghdād	Owner of agricultural lands, urban real estate, and of wholesale medicinal supply stores
Ḥadīd[n] (al-Ḥājj Ḥusain)	Arab Sunnī	—[o]	—[o]	Mosul	Owner of real estate
as-Ṣarrāf (ʿAbd-ul-Amīr)	Persian Shīʿī	Fourth	2,250	Baghdād	*Ṣarrāf* (half-broker, half-money-changer) and money-lender
Pāchachī (ʿAflīah)[p]	Arab Sunnī			Baghdād	Owners of urban real estate (farm lands that became residential) and agricultural property
al-Qāḍi (Ḥāfiḍh)	Arab Sunnī	Third	7,500	Baghdād	Owner of a farm in New York state, of real estate in Baghdād, and agent of Carrier-Air Conditioners; ex-agent of Ford Motor Co. and of R.C.A.
ad-Dahwī (ʿAbd-un-Nabī)	Arab Shīʿī	Third	7,500	Baghdād	Owner of farms and gardens, grain merchant, and a main shareholder in Date Industries Co. (capital 100,000 dīnārs)
Makiyyah (Kāḍhim, Khazʿal, and Qanbar)	Arab Shīʿī			Baghdād	Dealers in cloth and partners in Khazʿal Makiyyah and Jaʿfar Agha Co. (capital 100,000 dīnārs)

[a]The "financial consideration" of each member was determined by the Administrative Committee of the Chamber of Commerce in the light of the member's capital and volume of business and "such other facts and circumstances" as the committee deemed fit to take into account.

[b]"The Fattāḥṣ came from Tis'īn (a village in the province of Kirkūk), and in Ottoman times had been a Turkified Arab family.

[c]Simon Garibian was in 1938 a member of the Baṣrah Chamber of Commerce, on which no information is available.

[d]"Ḥamīd Dāmirchī is a son-in-law of Nūrī Fattāḥ.

[e]'Abd-ul-Hādī, the founder of the family's fortunes and the father of the above-mentioned persons, was a Bahā'ī.

[f]'Abd-ul-Wahhāb was a premier under the monarchy.

[g]Muṣtafa aṣ-Ṣabūnjī, the family's head in 1938, was a member of the Mosul Chamber of Commerce, on which no data are available.

[h]The full name of this person is 'Abdullah Luṭfī al-Ḥājj 'Alī Agha Tāna.

[i]Al-Ḥājj Hāshim Yūnis was in 1938 a member of the Mosul Chamber of Commerce, on which no information is available.

[j]Al-Ḥājj Ṣāliḥ Ibrahīm was the brother-in-law of Nūrī Fattāḥ.

[k]This person was in 1938 a member of the Baṣrah Chamber of Commerce, on which no data could be obtained.

[l]Most of the assets of the Lāwīs in 1958 were outside Iraq.

[m]'Abd-uj-Jabbār Maḥmūd was an ex-officer and the husband of Princess Rājiḥah, sister of King Ghāzī.

[n]al-Ḥājj Ḥusain Ḥadīd was the father of Muḥammad Ḥadīd, the one-time vice-chairman of the National Democratic party and himself a shareholder in the Vegetable Oil Extraction Co. The Ḥadīds are related by marriage to the Ṣabūnjīs.

[o]No data are available on the Mosul Chamber of Commerce.

[p]'Afīfah was the wife of Ḥamdī al-Pāchachī, a premier under the monarchy.

Source: List compiled by this writer with the help of a number of merchants, industrialists, brokers, and government officials. Figures relating to capital of companies obtained from the Directorate of Trade, Baghdād. Data concerning class of membership in Baghdād's Chamber of Commerce based on the chamber's membership list for fiscal 1938.

In the third place, it must be remembered that at Baghdād, in point of wealth, the upper and upper middle strata of the mercantile and moneyed classes were, in the first two decades of the monarchy and probably in the preceding half-century or so, predominantly foreign (British) or non-Moslem (Jewish),[255] and, if Moslem, involved more often than not in a web of interests with foreign capital. They were, therefore, on the whole, isolated from the mass of politically conscious Iraqis. At the same time, the relative economic weakness that had characterized the Moslem trading element since the days of the Mamlūks did not help it to assert an effective claim to adequate consideration from the ruling system or to develop a

capacity for sustained common pressure, overtly or behind the scenes, in defence of its interests. True, after the thirties and especially in the fifties, it piled up bigger and bigger fortunes, but now it was overshadowed by the sheer scale of the state's (and oil companies') financial resources: the entire Iraqi private corporate industrial and commercial capital in 1957 amounted to only 53.3 million dīnārs,[256] whereas in 1958 the state's receipts from oil alone stood at 79.8 million dīnārs.[257] Oil, as has already been pointed out, was making the state more and more economically autonomous from society. All this goes far to explain the relatively feeble political influence exercised by the men of capital, at least at Baghdād.

But the preceding broad generalizations do not do justice to the many-sidedness of the actual political history of this class. It is, therefore, necessary to be more specific.

Under the Mamlūks, whose form of government was that of a virtual autocracy tempered by a certain deference to local social forces, the *ra's-ut-tujjār* or chief of the merchants, had no seat in the *Dīwān*, that is, in the advisory Assembly of the pashalik. Whether he himself aspired to any role in the deliberations of political affairs is doubtful. The fortunes of the Mamlūk pashas were subject to such frequent mutations that, from the standpoint of mercantile interests, the only safe thing to do was to keep away from politics. On the other hand, so much depended upon the good pleasure of the pashas, that the temptation to win their favor or be on amicable terms with them could not sometimes be resisted. One *ra's-ut-tujjār*– Nu'mān Chalabī al-Pāchachī[258]–became a personal friend of Sa'īd Pasha (1813-1817) which, on the latter's fall, almost cost him his life, but the fact that he "never interfered in political or administrative matters and had been engrossed in commercial pursuits" pleaded on his behalf and assured his acquittal.[259]

The post of *ṣarrāf bāshī*– the pashalik's chief banker–banker incumbents of which were drawn from the wealthy Jewish merchant-*ṣarrāfs*, provided a wider opening to power, but of the indirect and manipulative kind. The potential influence of this office was enhanced by the circumstance that persons in high places were often under financial obligation to the money-lending *ṣarrāfs*, largely in consequence of the common practice in the Ottoman Empire of obtaining positions by purchase. As a rule, in view of

the vagaries of the pashas and of politics, and their own status as members of a religious minority, the *ṣarrāf bāshīs* weighed their risks with care and moved very warily. Some, however, stuck their necks out and suffered for it. The brothers Ezekiel and Ezra Gabbai are a case in point. Ezekiel, one of the richest *ṣarrāfs* of Mamlūk Baghdād, having, by one means or another, gotten in the good graces of Ḥalat Muḥammad Sa'īd Effendī, the Keeper of the Seal to Sultan Maḥmūd II (1808-1839), attained such an influence at Isṭanbūl that he is said to have inspired the people with "as much terror as the Janissaries,"[260] it being even affirmed that he had a hand in the fall of two pashas of Baghdād–dān the Little in 1811 and Sa'īd Pasha in 1817–and in the decapitation of one of the prominent '*ulamā*' of the city.[261] Ezekiel also made much money out of the sale of posts of pashas and *wālīs* to the highest bidders. "Sometimes," reports one Jewish historian, "as many as fifty or sixty Pashas crowded the antechamber of this high standing Jew."[262] Ezra, on his side, became the *ṣarrāf bāshī* of Dāūd Pasha (1817-1831), and at the same time his chief counsellor.[263] Eventually, however, both brothers got into hot water, and in 1826 or thereabouts paid with their lives for their immersion in politics.

For the period of seven decades or so that followed the overthrow of the Mamlūks (1831) and the beginning, under a reformed Ottoman regime, of the process of administrative centralization, the evidence bearing upon the political activities of the men of commerce is so fragmentary and so chronologically dispersed as to discourage the drawing of inferences of a general nature. Nonetheless, it would appear that, as a class, they left little trace in the political pages of Iraq's history. On the other hand, the Jewish traders and *ṣarrāfs* continued, as before, to play a leading part in the day-to-day affairs of their own community. Moreover, in isolated instances, individual merchants, by virtue of their wealth or ambition or artfulness or some chance occurrence, succeeded in rising to positions of authority, but their influence was brief and ephemeral. 'Abd-ul-Qāder ben Ziyādah the Mosulite, for example, became a favorite and the customs master of the Ottoman governor of Baghdād, 'Alī Riḍā Pasha al-Lāz (1831-1842). "The Pasha," wrote the British political agent in 1841,

> is so much governed by this officer as to give the conduct of the government almost entirely into his hands .... The interests of commerce too generally suffer from the Customs Master being himself a merchant; he also from his influence over the Pasha has the power of selling or arranging any place, privilege, monopoly, or interference, as he chooses; a source this of enormous gain to him and deep vexation and suffering to all classes of people."[264]

But, upon the recall of ʻAlī Riḍa Pasha al-Lāz by Isṭanbūl in 1842, ʻAbd-ul-Qāder ben Ziyādah fell from his eminence. Similarly, the Daniels, a family of tithe farmers, rose high in the favor of Muḥammad Rashīd Pasha al-Kuzlakī (1850–1856) or, in the words of a contemporary anonymous historian, "blended with him as water blends with wine" and by this means "prospered conspicuously. . . and became so deeply grounded in affairs... as to conceal the real situation from him and embezzle the public money. . . and went even as far as to corner the wheat, barley, and rice grown in the dependencies of Baghdād and to dispose of the supplies only after the rise of prices and according to their own purpose."[265] But the standing that the Daniels acquired did not outlast the death of the pasha in 1856. On the other hand, by subsequent speculation in land they added to their possessions and, under the monarchy, ranked as landlords of great wealth.[266]

In the out-of-the-way tribal towns of the nineteenth century, where the power of the Ottoman government was scarcely or only intermittently felt, some merchant-tribesmen accumulated considerable influence. Insofar as these towns were concerned, tribal raids appear to have constituted the first stage of commerce. One town that played a prominent part in bringing merchants and raiders together, or in transforming raiders into merchants, was Sūq-ish-Shuyūkh (literally, the Market of the Shaikhs), which was built some two hundred years ago by the chiefs of the Muntafiq tribal confederation. In the nineteenth century, there were no richer merchants in the whole lower Euphrates than those of Sūq-ish-Shuyūkh. No unworthy portion of their wealth was derived from their traffic in goods seized from caravans.[267] Aided by its position as the gateway to the valley of the Euphrates, and the South-Western Desert and immune, as it was, from taxation, Sūq-ish-Shuyūkh grew into an important market town, and on the

eve of World War I was something like a miniature town-state, its chief merchant, Ḥajjī Ḥasan Ḥamdānī, being its virtual ruler. Of the latter we are told that “he might have been Doge of Venice in its palmiest days.”[268] He had alliances with many shaikhs of surrounding tribes and was himself the shaikh of a section of the Albū Ḥamdān. He had also business relations all up the river Gharrāf, and was the partner of the big Persian merchant Agha Ja‘far of Baṣrah, owner of two Tigris steam launches,[269] and through him was connected with the ‘Īsā‘īs, the then richest Christian trading family of Baghdād.

From the processes of change that got under way in the last third of the nineteenth century, and that had been induced by the advent of steamers on the rivers and the piercing of the Suez Canal, the Jewish trading element, as has been noted, derived much benefit. But it grew in wealth without rising into political consequence. True, it acquired a voice in the municipal and provincial administrative councils that came into being in the 1870s and that had for object the association, within carefully defined limits, of local notables with the work of government and particularly in matters relating to taxation, public works, and the like; but its role in these bodies was of very little account. Of course, the Jewish merchants had, as before, the ability to buy, in official circles, such influence as could grease the wheels of their trade or, at least, free it from irritating impediments, but this method was expensive and could not always be counted on to advance or safeguard their interests. These circumstances may explain why they backed with sympathy the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, and with money the political clubs–clubs local Committees of Union and Progress–Progress which it gave rise. But of greater causal significance in this connection was another factor: the very special weight that their coreligionists gained in Young Turk counsels at Isṭanbūl. It even appears that Carasso, a Jewish deputy for Salonica, displayed in 1909 a “fierce zeal” in advocating the march on the capital and the overthrow of ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, and eventually had the satisfaction of being the mouthpiece of the deputation that conveyed to the sultan the resolve to depose him. Interestingly enough, after his arrest, ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd was imprisoned in a villa belonging to the Jewish bankers of the Committee of Union and Progress.[270] Not long afterwards Djavid Bey, another Jewish deputy for Salonica, was made minister of finance.

Moreover, according to the British ambassador at Isṭanbūl, Jewish elements succeeded in forming “a practically impenetrable ring” at the Turkish Admiralty and War Office, so much so that German embassy officials began paying “special court” to them, apparently with a view to securing their support for Germany’s political purposes, and in regard to concessions and business orders.[271]

Of no little historic import was the attempt made by Jewish capitalists at this point to persuade the Young Turks to introduce masses of Jewish colonists into Iraq and other parts of the Ottoman dominions. “We do not desire,” read a project circulated privately in 1910 among selected Young Turks, and authored by the Berlin Branch of the “Allgemeine Jüdische Kolonisations-Organisation,[272]

> that the immigration and settlement should be confined specially to one part of the Ottoman dominions but that the Jewish immigrants should be distributed to different parts. Nevertheless, it must be borne in mind that sending the immigrants to various points does not entail the entire separation of individuals and families from each other, for, in order to be able to fulfil his religious duties, a Jew is forced to live among his co-religionists .... We desire to see our co-religionists established in the towns as merchants, artisans, doctors, engineers, and teachers and at the same time we wish them to be scattered in the provinces and connected with agriculture.
>
> The parts of Turkey which seem most favourable for our present enterprise are Shaṭṭ-ul-‘Arab, Anatolia, Syria, and Palestine. . . . Although Iraq is large enough to contain ten times as many Jews as there are in the world, our programme includes the settlement of Jews in Cyprus and Egypt. . . .
>
> Our co-religionists will emigrate and settle at their own expense with the help of the bank and societies formed with the object of facilitating emigration....
>
> There will come into existence a state of affairs very profitable for Turkey and one worth consideration. ... If Turkey opens the doors to Jewish immigration, our co-religionists who occupy high positions, without running counter to the duties they owe their own countries,

will use all their influence for the political and economic advancement of the Constitutional Ottoman Government....

We can promise and assure the attachment and friendship of the Jews towards the new Jewish emigration centre and towards the Government which protects them, for we have the means of bringing about these feelings . . . ,[273]

Even more revealing was the confidential covering letter that the British ambassador at Isṭanbūl sent to the Foreign Office in London:

In my despatch... of the 29th December 1909, I had the honour to forward extracts from the "Jeune Turc" on the colonisation of Mesopotamia by Jews and alluding to the offer by Jewish capitalists to accommodate Turkey with the sums necessary to balance the recurring deficits in her budget as a *quid pro quo* for unrestricted Jewish immigration.

The conclusion of the recent loan by Djavid Bey[274] with mainly Jewish banking houses in Paris has again reminded some Turkish circles of this aspect of the Young Turk Problem and some suspect that Jewish immigration projects are in some way connected with the transaction, especially as Djavid Bey, who is himself a Jew, was some years ago actually employed on Zionist work. I have recently been given a copy of a pamphlet in Turkish, translation of which I have the honour to enclose, emanating from the German branch of the Jewish Colonisation Association and distributed privately among would-be-Young Turkey sympathisers with Jewish immigration schemes .... Israel Zangwill, in the April number of the *Fortnightly Review* also expresses the hope that under the Grand Vizierate[275] of Ḥaqqī Pasha, whose private secretary and official and private friends are Jews, the realisation of schemes for *founding an autonomous Jewish state in Mesopotamia*[276] may become possible.... The enclosed pamphlet is meant to present the subject in an inoffensive if not seductive form and to overcome Turkish suspicions and objections. It states that the scheme is purely humanitarian and non-political, that the Ottoman Government has only to sign a contract and the Jews will do the rest, that if Turkey accepts, Jews occupying high positions in other

> countries will use all their influence for the political and economic advancement of the Ottoman Constitutional Government, that important advantages will thus accrue to Turkey and the way of sure and influential alliances will be opened to her, and that the Ottoman statesmen, who undertake the foundation of “this lasting alliance”, i.e., with the Jewish nation, will earn the gratitude of the latter. It also states that when the right to form a *crédit foncier* shall have been obtained [by the Jews], capital will be forthcoming in abundance for colonisation purposes.
>
> A partial success in the latter scheme has just been obtained by a group of Jews closely connected with the inner workings of the Committee of Union and Progress. Among them is a certain Jacques Menasché, whose brother-in-law is private secretary to the Grand Vizier and whose wife’s charms have a special attraction for his Highness ....
>
> The parts of Turkey, which the pamphlet mentions as intended for Jewish settlement are the Shaṭṭ-ul-‘Arab, Anatolia, Syria, Palestine, Cyprus, and Egypt. These districts include practically the whole of Asiatic Turkey ....
>
> I have dwelt at some length on this subject owing to the important bearing it has on Young Turkey politics, despite the disclaimer of political designs in the Jewish immigration movement.[277]

It was apparently in connection with the project just described that Nāḍhim Bey, an influential member of the Salonica Committee of Union and Progress, visited in late 1910 the Paris branch of the Jewish Colonization Association. He himself was said to favor the opening of Iraq to “millions” of Russian Jewish emigrants.[278] Earlier, M. J. Niégo, the “agricultural inspector” of the Association arrived at Baghdād and, after consulting William Willcocks, an irrigation engineer who had been hired by Isṭanbūl to study the problems of river control, made a tour of the Euphrates valley.[279] But by the outbreak of the World War, nothing, at least as regards Iraq, appears to have been settled.

The Jewish traders were not alone in benefiting from the effects of the new communications. Arab and Kurdish merchants, who had been or came

in one way or another to be connected with agriculture, also prospered, and in a number of cities and towns, but not at Baghdād, some of them grew so strong that they acquired pretty much a free hand in public affairs. The means and methods by which they climbed to riches and influence varied according to individual and local circumstances.

One example, which comes at once to mind and which is not without its instructive value, is that of Muḥammad Chalabī Sābūnjī,[280] who was the virtual dictator of Mosul from about 1895 to 1911.

Ṣābūnjī descended from a family of humble extraction. In the 1870s his father reportedly hawked soap at the bridge gate of the city. But he left a fair competence to his son who, being endowed–endowed the words of a British consular official–"with more than ordinary shrewdness and few scruples" built it up into a large fortune. With his money and a certain flair for politics, he won a seat on the Administrative Council of the Mosul Wilāyah[281] and, through the influence that this position brought him, added further and in a big way to his wealth. His seat was in point of law elective and subject to annual renewal, but became in fact a permanency.

One secret of his success was his very liberal but at the same time discriminating hospitality. He kept open house to every visitor of note–Arab, Turk, or Kurd; governor, commandant, *sayyid*, or tribal chieftain. He also provided officials, stationed in Mosul, with all their furniture and, occasionally, with a house for the duration of their appointment. In this manner, he created for himself a net of useful friends in various parts of the wilāyah and even at Isṭanbūl. Simultaneously, he struck up alliances with the Chaldean patriarch Yūsuf Emmanuel II, and with neighboring Kurdish aghas and begs, including the chiefs of the Hamawand and Jāf tribes. In return for gifts, he kept these aghas and begs informed of the trend of politics, and when they got into trouble with the government, it was he who usually fixed matters on their behalf. To the *wālīs*, who, being frequently changed, were, as a rule, unfamiliar with local conditions and thus apt to be blown hither and thither by the factions of the moment, he made himself, by his knowledge and invaluable contacts, indispensable. The *wālīs* became, in effect, no more than his mouthpiece and, like other officials, were often under obligations to him. If unexpectedly obstacles rose up in his path, he smoothed them down with bribes in "the right quarter," By these and other means, his position eventually became well-nigh unassailable.[282]

Much of Ṣābūnjī's wealth was derived from the sale of the agricultural produce which he received in his capacity as "owner" or "part-owner" of the numerous villages that he and his partners–partners or the other of the Kurdish aghas–aghas from defenseless peasants. Or to be more precise, many peasants in the Mosul Wilāyah, having no means of obtaining protection from raids which he and his partners instigated, had no alternative but to attach themselves to him or to the aghas as clients, and to make over formally their lands and villages to their "protectors."[283] There were also other sources for Ṣābūnjī's wealth. The *defterdār* or treasurer of the wilāyah, wrote the British vice-consul at Mosul in 1911,

> tells me that Ṣābūnjī's method of enriching himself at the expense of the state is exactly similar, on a larger scale, to the methods followed by the notables of Sulaimāniyyah, namely, (1) by remaining permanently a member of the Administrative Council (this is the *sine qua non* of his influence); (2) by seeing to it that the local tax-gatherers are his own nominees; (3) by paying merely nominal taxes; (4) by compelling persons to sell him property at a low price; (5) by being in league with the worst characters in the district with a view to the carrying out of any project on hand.
>
> With this miscreant the *Defterdār* is powerless to deal or even to compel him to pay his taxes for the ludicrous but very sufficient reason that no action can be taken against him except by permission of the council, which he himself controls.[284]

The notables of Sulaimāniyyah, to whom the *defterdār* referred, were the wealthy landed merchants Hajjī Sayyid Agha, Fattāḥ Bey, and ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān Agha, who held all the threads in the Administrative Council of their own town.[285] What Ṣābūnjī, their ally, did at Mosul, they did at Sulaimāniyyah, but in a somewhat cruder fashion. In a telegram sent in 1911 to Nāḍhim Pasha, the *wālī* of Baghdād, Ṣafwat Bey, Sulai-māniyyah's military commander, complained:

> Hajjī Sayyid Agha, Fattāḥ Bey, and ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān Agha . . . have illegally possessed themselves of twelve pieces of land .... They take care that no one outside the Administrative Council should see the

accounts of the revenue-farmers and thus are able every year to rob the Treasury of 9,500 līras. They restricted to their own circle the right to bid for the farming of the tax in the Zāb [region] and knocked it down for 25,000 piastres, although an outside bidder offered 75,000 piastres.

Before assuming my temporary duties here I discovered. . . that whereas the receipts of the municipality for the year amounted to 98,000 piastres, in a return passed by the Administrative Council they were stated to be only 40,000....

These men are microbes battening on the Treasury ....

It is for us soldiers not to suffer these rogues to oppress the people[286] or to impair in any way the honour, majesty, and power of the Government.[287]

This was the language of new forces–forces Young Turk military revolutionists. It was they that in the end caught up with Sābūnjī. He tried to ward off blows from their direction: he declared his support for the 1908 Revolution, and without delay put together a Committee of Union and Progress at Mosul. All the same, in 1911, upon orders from them, he was eased out of the Administrative Council,[288] and the political influence that he and his confederates enjoyed was swept away.

Another merchant-politician, who perhaps surpassed Ṣābūnjī in acumen and deftness, was Muḥsin ash-Shallāsh. In the last years of the Ottoman regime he had much say in the shaping of the course of affairs in the city of Najaf, but prudently kept to the background and did not come into the political limelight until the British conquest of the country, when at first–first so much by choice as from the necessity of the emotive situation at Najāf–f sided with the independence movement; but later–later the suppression of the 1920 uprising–uprising in the direction to which his commercial interests urged him, he rendered "many useful services" to the occupying power.[289] Moneylender, speculator, trader, landowner, manager of the Najaf Tramway Co., and a minister of finance under the monarchy, he had his finger "in every pie" at Najaf. How powerful he had grown by the nineteen twenties can be gathered from the following note taken from the British intelligence records:

> Muḥsin ash-Shallāsh is the richest merchant in Najaf and his biggest pie is the district of Abū Sukhair. His fortune has been made by loaning money to cultivators at exorbitant interest and recouping himself with grain at the time of the harvest. He is reputed to have made 33,000 Turkish pounds from the 1924 crop of that district. Above all he is the particular confident, adviser, and money-lender of Al-Fatlah, the Shaikh of Al-Fatlah. There is nothing in the Mishkāb[290] that he does not know of and he has forgotten more about the Fatlah than any official has yet learnt. His hand can be traced in every item of administration in Abū Sukhair and he has no scruples whatsoever should his interests be affected by an energetic *Qāimmaqām.*[291] He is a man of great wealth and great influence and his power stretches far beyond the city of Najaf. His creed is Ḥajjī Muḥsin. With

> consummate agility he will play the King, the *‘ulamā’*, the shaikhs, the tribes, the British, and the Government as long as any can further the interests of Ḥajjī Muḥsin. Should any stand in the way of his affairs he will stoop to the lowest intrigue to remove the obstruction. He owns land in Raqq-il-Ḥaṣwah and Hor-is-Sulaib. Practically there is not a cultivator in the Mishkāb who is not in debt to him.... Ḥajjī Muḥsin is a charming man. He entertains delightfully. He is full of information and one never tires of listening to his chatter. It goes without saying that he is a “first class brain.” Ḥajjī Muḥsin is a danger to administration in the Abū Sukhair district.[292]

The method by which Muḥsin ash-Shallāsh made his money, and to which the note refers, was called by the cultivators *al-bai’ ‘ala-l-akḍar* (literally, sale while the crops are green), and was a means of quick gain that had much favor with the *ṣarrāfs* and money-lending merchants generally: before the maturing of their crops, cultivators, in particular the small peasant proprietors that abounded in the mid-Euphrates, were often forced to rely on the merchants for ready money, which was not advanced to them unless they made out forward contracts to the effect that they would surrender so many tons of grain or all the produce at such-and-such a rate, which was almost always below the market rate at the time of the harvest.

During the years of British ascendancy and in the monarchic period, quite a few of the men who became prominent in oppositional or insurrectionary movements descended from *chalabī* families that had been bound up with the old forms of industry or modes of transport and had declined in wealth but not in prestige, or from *chalabī* or other mercantile families that were adversely affected by the segregation of Mosul and other northern provinces from large areas in Syria and Turkey with which they had been economically connected before the First World War. From the former families sprang, for example, Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman, a key leader and inspirer of the 1920 Uprising, the head and heart in 1922 and from 1928 to 1933 of the National party, and a major participant in the military- *Ahālī* coup of 1936; Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl, the father of Iraq’s Marxists;[293] and Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, a member from 1930 to 1933 of the Central

Committee of the National party, the vice-chairman from 1935 to 1941 of the pan-Arab Muthanna Club, and from 1946 to 1959 the chairman of the Independence party. To the latter families belonged, among others, Colonel Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, the real axis from 1936 to 1941 of the pan-Arab segment of the younger army officers and the moving spirit in the coups d'état of 1938 and 1941; Ṣiddīq Shanshal, a conspicuous member of the Muthanna Club and of the army regime of 1941, and in the fifties secretary of the Independence party; and Muḥammad Ḥadīd, a founder of *al-Ahālī* group and from 1946 to 1960 vice-chairman of the National Democrats.[294] In other words, the segments of the mercantile class injured by the expansion of Europe's power and capital provided leaders to almost the entire gamut of Iraq's political opposition. Why, in acting against the existing state of things, this or that particular leader took a "left" or "right" position, or turned to pan-Arabism, or held to an Iraqist perspective could be traced to specific or chance circumstances in his life. This goes without saying.

In the twenties and thirties few ranked higher in popular esteem than Ja'far Abū-t-Timman. Indeed, to a broad spectrum of Iraqis of varying persuasions, even to the Communists, he stood, until his death in 1945, as the symbol of irreconcilable opposition to British influence. A man of courage and genuine warmth, whom not even politics could corrupt, he had been born in 1881 to a Shī'ī trading family of Baghdād. His grandfather possessed great wealth, but had heavy investments in camels and sailing ships[295] and naturally suffered from the country's shift to the new forms of transport. Moreover, during the years of World War I, in his eighties, being strongly attached to traditional beliefs and having observed all the precepts of Islam except that of *jihād*, he spent much of the rest of his money to outfit and maintain a group of volunteers who fought in support of Ottoman troops against the English invaders.[296] This, as could be imagined, raised the standing of the family in the eyes of both the Sunnī and Shī'ī communities. Its fortune, however, continued to decline. Ja'far's father, also a trader, had no feel for the marketplace and never made good. Ja'far himself rose to the presidency of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce and served in that capacity from 1935 to 1945, but wholly lacked the acquisitive instinct, and died in reduced circumstances.[297]

Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman’s enduring significance derives from his role in the 1920 events. With others, he formed the center of the independence movement at Baghdād, but to him, in the first place, belonged the credit for bringing, at that historic juncture, Shī‘īs and Sunnīs together. To turn this temporary closing of ranks into a lasting political fact became a persistent burden of his thought. In his view, there was no other way to break English influence. Oftentimes Shī‘ī politicians sought to draw him toward sectarian politics, but he invariably gave them the cold shoulder. Once, in 1927, at a point of crisis in the relations between King Faiṣal I and the English, and after the English had succeeded in attracting to their side many of the Shī‘ī members of the Chamber of Deputies, the paramount Shī‘ī “mujtahid,[298] Shaikh Muḥammad Ḥusain Kāshif-ul-Ghaṭā‘, approached Abū-t-Timman and urged him to join his coreligionists. But Abū-t-Timman firmly refused. Such matters, he said, were best resolved by himself, as he knew the consequences better than the shaikh who, he emphasized, was not a man of politics but of religion. The Shī‘ī deputies, he added, had regard only for their own good. When the shaikh brought out that it had been suggested that Abū-t-Timman should be recommended to the English to head the next cabinet, Abū-t-Timman, smiling, ridiculed the notion and said that, even supposing the English gave their consent, he could never cooperate with them, as they would expect him to act in their interests, a thing he would never do.[299]

Toward the two interconnected goals that he chose for himself–himself union of Shī‘īs and Sunnīs and the elimination of English power–powerū-t-Timman steered the chief efforts of the National party, which was forcibly closed almost at birth in 1922, right after his arrest and exile to Henjam, a dreary island in the Gulf, but which he reformed in 1928. However, as it progressed, the party took on more than a purely nationalist coloring. This followed from the social character of the support which it attracted. Middle merchants, like Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, Sa‘īd al-Ḥajj Thābet, and Abū-t-Timman himself; or nationalist intellectuals or members of the professions, like the dean of Āl-il-Bait University Fahmī al-Mudarris, the writer and poet Mahdī al-Baṣīr, the lawyer ‘Alī Maḥmūd ash-Shaikh, and the president of the Bar Association Bahjat Zainal; or uncompromising or dissatisfied ex-Sharīfian officers, like ‘Abd-ul-Ghaffūr al-Badrī, Mawlūd Mukhliṣ, and Maḥmūd Rāmiz, formed, it is true, the party’s leading

layer,[300] but its grass roots were among the handicraft workers and petty tradesmen.[301] Hence the sensitivity it showed for the conditions and grievances of these sections of the people, even while giving priority to the national struggle. Hence also its initiatory role in the founding in 1929 of the Artisans' Association,[302] and its active guidance of the fourteen-day General Strike of 1931, which was sparked off by the imposition of a monthly tax on traders and the crafts, but which the party also used to flay the government of Nūrī as-Sa'īd for its acceptance of the unequal Treaty of 1930.[303]

At bottom, however, the National party was inextricably tied to the person of Abū-t-Timman: he promoted it, put up the money to finance its enterprises, even went into debt to keep it on its feet,[304] and when, in October of 1933, he turned his back upon it, it expired.

It is not clear whether financial stringency had anything to do with Abū-t-Timman's withdrawal from the party. Many of his colleagues talked volubly about "the motherland," but when it came to contributing funds they were not quite so keen. In 1928 the sum subscribed by the entire party membership amounted to only 950 rupees or 71 pounds sterling, whereas the rent for the party's house alone came to 1,900 rupees.[305] However, monetary difficulties could have been at most only a secondary factor in his decision to resign. One other minor consideration was his discovery at some point in 1933 that Mawlūd Mukhliṣ, a member of the party's Central Committee, had, under the influence of alcohol, been keeping no secret from King Faiṣal I.[306] But the decisive reason was indubitably the split that rent the party's guiding layer over whether or not it should take part in general elections and in the parliamentary game. Abū-t-Timman himself was convinced that Iraq had the name rather than the effects of an elective regime; and did not, at any rate, conceive of the role of the party as that of a loyal opposition. The party, he feared, would sink to haggling with the government over seats, and would thus move away from its idealistic roots and discredit itself. However, the majority of the party's leaders were in a compromising mood and swept his objections aside, only soon to find that they had become leaders without followers.[307]

Two other things regarding the National party must be emphasized. First, it led off the earliest attempt to put labor on the political map. The Artisans' Association, which the party, as we have seen, inspired, bore initially the

imprint of a craftsmen's guild, but by dint of the acute economic depression of 1929-1931 and the energy and commitment of Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Qazzāz, a mechanic, a descendant of a silk tradesman, a sympathizer of the party, and Iraq's first labor leader, the association attracted many of the hands at the Railway and Defence Workshops in Baghdād,[308] and fairly rapidly assumed the character of a political combination of laboring people. It became, in fact, the direct organizing center of the fourteen-day General Strike and, for that reason, was suppressed in 1931.[309] But Qazzāz continued to agitate on behalf of labor and in 1932 established the "Workers' Federation of Iraq," which in turn was shattered at the end of 1933 for its role in a month-long boycott of the British-owned Baghdād Electric Light and Power Company.[310] When a decade later trade union activity revived, it revived under communist auspices.

Equally worthy of emphasis is the fact that from the ranks of the National party emerged men who furnished leadership to three basic oppositional tendencies of the future–future tradition-conscious pan-Arab reformism of the Muthanna Club and the Independence party; the left-wing Iraqist populism of the *Ahālī* group, the Association of People's Reform, and the National Democratic party; and the revolutionary current which found expression in the Association Against Imperialism and the Communist Party of Iraq.[311] Abū-t-Timman himself threw the weight of his influence on the side of the men of *A l-Ahālī* and of Popular Reform.

Enough attention is paid elsewhere to communism and its devotees. The two other tendencies are not unrelated to the history of the mercantile and moneyed classes, but their discussion in these pages must be held to brief length.

The pan-Arab movement, of course, anteceded the National party. It had been spawned in the aftermath of the 1908 Young Turk Revolution.[312] Moreover, in the twenties many of its adherents had identified themselves fully with the monarchic regime.[313] It is, therefore, only in its fervid form that it existed as a trend within the National party between 1928 and 1933. In the army it had its most zealous representatives in a secret group of young officers that began from 1929 to gather around Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, who descended from a Mosul merchant of Ṣaidan[314] origin, and who for a time maintained contacts with Ja'far Abū-t-Timman,[315] but in

1935-1936 gave unstinting support to the pan-Arab-oriented Premier Yāsīn al-Hāshimī, and simultaneously drew close to the Muthanna Club.[316] Founded in 1935 and avowedly committed to "disseminating the spirit of Arab nationalism, . . . preserving Arab traditions, . . . strengthening the sense of Arab manhood in youth, and creating a new Arab culture which would unite to the Arab heritage what is worthy in the civilization of the West,"[317] the Muthanna Club soon developed leanings or betrayed instincts akin to authoritarianism. In its front rank stood men from mercantile backgrounds[318] or from the professional middle class[319] or from what, on other pages,[320] has been identified as the old "aristocracy" of officials.[321] But the club derived its strength essentially from its links with the army group headed by Colonel Ṣabbāgh who, on his side, had much of his support among the numerous officers who, like him, originated from the northern Arab provinces which were still economically depressed by reason of their severance from their natural trading areas in Syria and the ensuing customs barriers and diversity of currencies and of business laws and conditions, and whose concrete interests, therefore, pointed unambiguously in the direction of pan-Arabism. This, to be sure, is not the entire meaning of the pan-Arab trend that Ṣabbāgh personified or that the Muthanna Club kept ideologically alive, but merely one of its aspects which, from the viewpoint of the present chapter, bears underlining.

The Muthanna Club reached the height of its development in 1938–1941, that is, during the years in which Ṣabbāgh's group had a dominant voice in the army and in the administration of the country. Congruently enough, the destruction or dispersal of this group, induced by the British military intervention of 1941, led to the breakup of the club. However, from its surviving leadership emerged in 1946 the central nucleus of the Independence party, which identified itself as "solidarist," "wholist," "populist," and "modernist." It declared, in other words, its opposition to "the class standpoint" and to "regional, sectarian, and religious fanaticism," and its support for "the sovereignty of the nation" and "an adaptation to the spirit of the time even while clinging to the old and venerable distinguishing attributes and high principles." At the same time, it called for a fully independent Iraq and for the unifying of the currencies, customs administration, and the existing or projected central banks of the Arab countries, and the eventual establishment of a federated Arab state.[322] The

party grew rapidly, counting in 1947 no fewer than 5,450 members who, according to the records of the police, were "for the most part drawn from retired army officers and government officials and from the liberal professions."[323] As many as two to three hundred had, on account of their association with the Muthanna Club and the 1941 military movement, spent several years in exile or under lock and key, whence the half-playful remark of the minister of interior in 1946 to the effect that the Independents were "a party of prisoners and detainees."[324] The legal profession was well represented. Of the thirty-seven, who belonged to the party's Supreme Committee, twenty-six were lawyers from predominantly middle class backgrounds.[325] Two ex-officers,[326] two ex-college professors, two journalists, two middle landowners, and three middle merchants made up the rest of the leading body which, from the religious or sectarian aspect, comprised two Christians, fifteen Shī'īs, and twenty Sunnīs. But the party had no intensive inner life, and from the late forties onward revolved essentially around its chairman, Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, its deputy chairman, Fā'iq as-Sāmarrā'ī, and its secretary, Ṣiddīq Shanshal. A small landlord, a trader of moderate means, a nationalist of a traditional hue, a politician with clean hands but scarcely capable of imaginative leadership, Kubbah had been born in 1900 at the holy town of Sāmarrā' to an old and widely respected Shī'ī *chalabī* family which traces to the tribe of Rabī'ah, and was once important in the silk trade and of commanding authority in the Qushal quarter of Baghdād, but went down in wealth in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Incidentally, Kubbah dates his pan-Arab impulses back to the frequent heated disputes that he carried on in his earliest youth with non-Arab students who formed the majority in the religious schools at Sāmarrā', a fact that appears to have rubbed him the wrong way.[327] Shanshal, who was ten years younger than Kubbah, was the brother-in-law of Yūnis as-Sab'āwī, Colonel Ṣabbāgh's closest civilian associate,[328] and descended from a Mosul Sunnī family which, before the First World War, had thriving trade relations with Aleppo and Diyār Bakr but, after the partition of the Ottoman territories, fell behind economically and migrated to Baghdād. Unlike Kubbah, who received a solid religious foundation, Shanshal had his training in law at Damascus and Paris, which accounts for his distinctly legalistic approach to politics. Fā'iq as-Sāmarrā'ī, who was of Shanshal's age, was also a lawyer but with a degree from Baghdād. Like

Kubbah, he hailed from Sāmarrā' but had a humble Sunnī background. In the thirties he became "the right hand of Rashīd 'Āli al-Gailānī, and was in or out of government employment depending on whether the latter was in or out of power."[329] Indubitably, he was the most able man in the Independence party, but at the same time the least scrupulous. Between 1946 and 1952, that is, during the most active years in the life of the party, he was its chief source of ideas and initiative. However, after the mid-fifties, even he could not rescue it from the immobility to which it had fallen a prey, and which flowed partly from its drawing-room style of politics and partly from the drift of its younger elements into the Ba'th party and the general swing of the political mood of Iraq's youth toward the left.[330]

Populist reformism had its earliest expression in a group that began editing *Al-AhāIī* in January of 1932 and that had formed, some months before, around 'Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm, Muḥammad Ḥadīd, Ḥusain Jamīl, and 'Abd-ul-Qāder Ismā'īl. Jamīl and Ismā'īl were Baghdādi lawyers and had been good friends from their secondary school days. Ibrahīm was also from Baghdād and a cousin of Ismā'īl. He and Ḥadīd, who was a Mosulite, were at the time in the government service and had been classfellows at the American University of Beirut. All had been born in 1906 except for Jamīl, who was their junior by two years. All were Sunnīs–s nonsectarian and secular in their orientation–orientation Arabs save for Ismā'īl, who was of mixed Arab-Indian parentage. Jamīl sprang from a family that claimed descent from the Prophet. His father had been a civil magistrate, and his grandfather a *sharī'ah*[331] judge. But, from the standpoint of income, he formed part of the intermediate segment of society. So did Ismā'īl, who was the son of a business agent of the *naqīb* of Baghdād, and Ibrahīm, who descended from a long line of *mudarris* or religious teachers. Hadīd's background was mercantile. His mother belonged to the oldest *chalabī* family of Mosul–Mosul Dabbāghs–ghs his paternal grandfather, who was also a *chalabī*, had carried a prosperous trade with Diyār Bakr. However, after the First World War his father gave up commerce completely and invested his money in land, much of which became, in the forties and fifties, residential and shot up acutely in value. Only Ibrahīm and Ḥadīd had a working knowledge of English or had traveled in Western countries.

Ibrahīm had spent a semester in 1930 at the Graduate College of Columbia University. Hadīd had attended the London School of Economics from 1928 to 1931, and had been caught up in the ideas of Professor Harold Laski, a widely known socialist and agnostic.[332]

"The good of the people above every other good" formed from the outset the rallying cry of the new group. "By the people," they explained, "we mean the great majority," whose good demanded an anxious sense of interest in "raising the standard of living, . . . creating a sound political and economic order, and turning to best advantage the country's intellectual talents and material resources." For this, it was necessary to "bid the past farewell" and proceed on "new foundations" toward "a genuine renaissance" which could only issue from "a social philosophy and a spiritual force" and which would, therefore, require "two simultaneous revolutions," one "intellectual" and the other "ethical and psychological." *Al-Ahālī* itself was but an instrument toward the hoped-for renaissance, and was to serve as "a school for the people." It pinned its expectations, in the first place, on youth, but on a type of youth that "acts rather than advertizes," and that would mix with the populace and feel for its woes and agonies. Its preferred method was that of "generalizing education." In other words, it put a premium on "gradual and peaceful change rather than violence."[333]

Otherwise, the ideas, that *Al-Ahālī* put forward were vague and incoherent, and echoed sometimes the Fabians,[334] sometimes Marx,[335] and occasionally Darwin[336] or Russia's narodniks or populists.[337] Even after the identification of the group in 1935 with a reformist and liberal democratic variety of socialism,[338] for which the term *sha'biyyah* (literally, populism) was coined, a certain nebulousness continued to characterize its principles. This arose partly out of the resistance in its ranks to anything approaching strict intellectual conformism, and partly from the fact that its founders' own positions were still half-formed, as eventually became only too obvious.

Inasmuch as most of the votaries of *Al-Ahālī* were civil servants and could not, under the law, combine in a political party, they launched in September of 1933 the ostensibly cultural Association for Combatting Illiteracy[339] and, under its cover, increased their support and won converts at Baṣrah and in such other provincial towns as Nāṣiriyyah, Kūfah, Ba'qūbah,

and Ḥillah. For this they had to thank primarily Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman who, by joining hands with them at this juncture and accepting the headship of the Association, added markedly to their moral stature. They were also fortunate in the espousal of their cause in the same year by Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, a fearless thirty-six-year-old lawyer-journalist, a descendant of a family belonging to the old “aristocracy” of officials, and the son of a one-time mayor of Ottoman Baghdād. A dubious gain was Ḥikmat Sulaimān, who came over in 1935. An ex-minister of the interior, a landed professional politician, a son of an Ottoman district governor, Sulaimān, now aged fifty, had been embittered by his omission from the cabinet of Yasīn al-Hāshimī.[340]

The adherence of Abū-t-Timman, Chādirchī, and Sulaimān had the effect of transforming the men of *Al-Ahālī* from an ideological into a practically oriented group. The role of their original leaders was also somewhat eclipsed. The break of ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm with the movement in the spring of 1936 may be seen partly in this light, and partly as an outcome of his temperamental incompatibility with Chādirchī. “ ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm,” Chādirchī would explain later, “is impatient and does not possess the gift of laughter. Worse than that, he regards his opinions as indisputable and any variance from them as a personal enmity.”[341] From the standpoint of ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm, “Chādirchī was too much attracted to the momentary tactical side of things.” He laid to him the tie-up with Ḥikmat Sulaimān, “an unreliable man.” “I wanted,” he said, “to keep the identity of our group distinct.” He also maintained that the real cause of his withdrawal was his opposition to hitching horses with General Bakr Ṣidqī.[342]

Be that as it may, the idea of establishing contact with the army originated with Ḥikmat Sulaimān and was at first met with misgivings not only from ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm but also from Abū-t-Timman, Chādirchī, and Ḥadīd, who, with Ḥikmat Sulaimān, constituted the leading *Ahālī* committee in 1936. “We were asked,” said Chādirchī, “to admit to our group a person whose face we have not even seen . . . . Eventually Bakr Ṣidqī visited me at my home. I found him inscrutable and very reticent . . . . His decision to rise against the government was sudden. One day Ḥikmat Sulaimān came to us and said: ‘Ṣidqī wants to pull a coup. Shall we espouse it or isolate ourselves from it?’ In opting to join with Ṣidqī, we

assumed that Ṣidqī would be controlled by Ḥikmat and Ḥikmat by Abū-t-Timman."[343]

Although the men of *Al-Ahālī* obtained half of the portfolios in the government that issued from the coup d'état of 29 October 1936, and were able on 12 November to organize themselves openly in the Association of People's Reform,[344] they realized soon enough that in fact they counted only for as much as accorded with the wishes of Bakr Ṣidqī, who bent Ḥikmat to his purpose and arrogated to himself conclusive power. At the same time, he did not show sufficient sensitivity to the moods or real needs of the country. Ultimately, he relied on the Kurdish segment of the officer corps but also kept, in the words of Chādīrchī, "a retinue of riffraff s," and created such an atmosphere that opponents of his regime stood in fear of physical elimination. Distrustful of his ends and recoiling from his means, the *Ahālī* leaders turned their backs on him on 19 June 1937. Not long afterwards, their paper and their Association of People's Reform were suppressed and their followers hounded and scattered.

Two further points concerning the men of the *Ahālī* need to be stressed. First, there is no truth to the assertion that they affiliated with the Communist International. On 12 September 1948, a certain "Agent R" wrote to the British "Technical Adviser" of Iraq's political police:

> My connection with the Soviet Minister, though was indeed very friendly, yet could by no means compare favourably with that of mine with Ludmila Martinova, his confidential secretary . . . .
>
> I asked her if the National Democratic Party was at all a pseudo-Communist party. She rejoined that the party is actually not Communist but in fact a member of the Comintern. She expounded that Kāmel ach-Chādirchī together with a group joined the Comintern in 1935 when the Seventh Comintern Congress . . . met at Moscow to recommend the establishment of a united fighting front . . . against the Fascist menace.[345]

Obviously Martinova was pulling the leg of "Agent R." The Comintern, which was dissolved in 1943, did not admit non-Communist groups into the fold. More than that, as noted elsewhere,[346] the Soviets voiced reservations in 1937 about the aims of the *Ahālī* reformists.

Again, it is not correct to maintain that "the Communist movement in Iraq may be regarded as an offshoot of the *Ahālī* movement."[347] The first study group of a Marxist coloring was formed in 1924,[348] and the first Communist circle in 1927,[349] that is, five years before the appearance of *Al-Ahālī*. If anything, the causal sequence was the other way round. It is sufficient in this connection to bring out that ʻAbd-ul-Qāder Ismāʻīl, one of the founders of *Al-Ahālī*, had turned to the Communists for his ideas as early as 1928,[350] and that he and his associate ʻAbd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm were cousins of Maḥmūd Aḥmad as-Sayyid, a member of the 1924 Marxist group. To this should be added that the National Unionists, a party of about 500 men that ʻAbd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm organized in 1946, and that the government forcibly closed in 1947, was out-and-out Marxist in its orientation.[351]

The true heirs of *Al-Ahālī* group, or rather of its non-Marxist wing, were the National Democrats. Entering into activity in 1946, they set themselves the task of "reforming" by "democratic means" and in accordance with "a comprehensive coordinated scientific plan" "all the aspects" of Iraq's life with a view to the ultimate creation of "a modern democratic state." More concretely, they stood for the distribution of government land to farmers in small parcels; the "encouragement, guidance, and overseeing" by the state of "national capital" and "individual enterprise" in the field of industry; the setting up of special semiofficial boards for every principal branch of commerce to improve the quality and facilitate the transport and marketing of Iraq's products; the establishment of a central currency-issuing national bank and other institutions for the short-term and long-run financing of trade, industry, and agriculture; the putting through of graduated income and inheritance taxes; the increase of the peasant's share of the agricultural produce; the "guaranteeing of the workers' rights;" the attainment of a genuine democratic parliamentary life; and the "completion" of Iraq's independence. [352]

The party's program, it will be noted, made no mention of "socialism," or of the big agricultural holdings, or of the desirability of breaking them up; and, while reflecting, but in a subdued form, many of the ideas of the *Ahālī* group of the thirties, was also closely attuned to the tendencies of the "national" and more liberal of the industrialists, merchants, and urban rentiers. In the words of Ḥusain Jamīl, the party's secretary, the object in

view was “to carry (Iraq) to the capitalist stage and at the same time eliminate the evils of capitalism.”[353]

Significantly, out of the eight founding members of the party, three had never had ties previously with the *Ahālī* movement:‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Mirjān, a lawyer from Ḥillah, a son of a newly rich landowner and wheat-mill proprietor, and a grandson of a slave of the tribe of Albū Sulṭān; ‘Abbūd-ush-Shāljī, a successful lawyer from an old Baghdādi mercantile *chalabī* family; and ‘Abd-ul-Karīm al-Uzrī, a London-educated ex-assistant chief of the Royal Dīwān and a well-to-do property owner from Kāḍhimain. Apart from Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, Muḥammad Ḥadīd, and Ḥusain Jamīl, the other founding members were Yūsuf-ul-Ḥājj Ilyās, a lawyer and the son of a Mosul merchant; and Ṣādeq Kammūnah, a lawyer from a family that had in the past provided the marshals of the *sādah* of the town of Najaf. Muḥammad Ḥadīd, a quiet and cautious man and the most effective of the party’s leaders, had by this time become an industrialist: he occupied since 1939 the position of director of the Vegetable Oil Extraction Company, in which he was also an important shareholder. For his part, Ḥusain Jamīl was already generally regarded as one of the ablest counsellors-at-law in Baghdād. At the head of the party stood, of course, Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, who continued to live as before from the proceeds of the lands bequeathed to him by his father, and who was very lively, very outspoken, and widely respected, but weak on the side of theory, hasty in his judgments, and in politics scarcely a realist.

The party attracted a large following particularly in Baghdād, Baṣrah, and the middle Euphrates and by April 1947 counted 6,961 members,[354] 50 to 60 percent of whom came, according to the party’s secretary,[355] from the middle walks of life, and comprised merchants, shopkeepers, small property owners, craftsmen, students, teachers, lawyers, and other professionals. A proportion of the rank-and-file consisted of peasants, but the bulk of the remainder were urban workmen who, however, in their greater number were only nominally National Democrats and owed real allegiance to the Iraqi Communist party or to the League of Iraqi Communists.[356]

Chādirchī and his colleagues had their first inkling that the party’s lower layers were not entirely responsive to their will at the party’s first general meeting which was held on 26 April 1946. They had nominated to the Central Administrative Committee seven of the party’s founders,[357] but the

majority of the 760 members that attended the meeting defeated ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Mirjān, one of the nominees, and elected instead a left-winger, the Baghdādi lawyer Zakī ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb.[358] This led to the withdrawal from the party of Mirjān, whom Nūrī as-Sa‘īd soon attracted to his own circle and eventually elevated to the premiership. In a reshuffling of the Central Committee by the party’s First Congress on 28 November 1946, another left-winger, Ṭal‘at ash-Shaibānī, a lawyer from al-Huwaidir, a village in the province of Diyālah, was raised to the party’s command.[359] When next a group of Communists in the party’s ranks–“The Progressive Wing of the National Democratic Party”[360]–came out into the open and criticized the Central Committee for a decision that it had taken to participate in the general elections of February 1947, and for its acceptance earlier of an offer of a post in a transitional election-conducting cabinet headed by Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, the core of the party’s leadership–Chādirchī, Ḥadīd, and Ḥusain Jamīl–realized that a purge of the body of their organization was indispensable, if they wanted to prevent their own followers from being gradually drawn out from under their influence.

In due course, all who identified themselves with the “Progressive Wing” were expelled from the party, but these formed only a portion of the party’s large contingent of Communists and Communist-sympathizing elements. From the standpoint of Chādirchī, steps of a more fundamental nature appeared, therefore, to be indicated. At closed sessions of the Central Committee, held in September-November 1947, he argued that the real source of the party’s troubles lay in the haziness of its ideology, and urged that the party commit itself unequivocally to “democratic socialism” or, as he also put it, to “the philosophy of the British Labour Party.” This, he maintained, would not only differentiate the National Democrats sharply from the Communists, but would put an end to the false propaganda that the government had begun to circulate and that pictured the party as a Communist or semi-Communist organization. There was another advantage to be derived from such a commitment. “Opportunities,” he said, “are opening before our party and can be inferred from the determination of the English in Iraq to combat Communism and oppose at the same time the Independence Party in the existing circumstances.” “The English, I think,” he added,

> believe that our party's command has demonstrated that it is steering the party towards a democratic course but are not convinced that the democratic ideal permeates the party's ranks . . . . I, accordingly, consider that the proclamation of democratic socialism as our guiding philosophy and the consistent adherence to it in our party's life has become also a necessity from a tactical point of view . . . . The English are no doubt aware that a democratic party like ours cannot be chauvinistically inimical to them or to others in any case, even if our friendship for them cannot be taken for granted.

Chādirchī warned, however, that the possibilities in the evolving situation should not lead to "any bargaining on our part with the English at the expense of any party or of the national demands of the people or of our party's own principles."[361]

Muḥammad Ḥadīd took a stand against the adoption "at the present time" of "democratic socialism." This, he maintained, would create an impression of a lack of stability in the policy of a party that had been in existence for only eighteen months, and might induce a grievous loss of public confidence. "Socialism," he added, "means the nationalization of industries . . . and of banks . . . and, in agricultural countries, the distribution of the land to the peasantry . . . ," all of which flatly contradicted the party's announced aims. At the same time, he insisted on the need to give the party a distinctiveness that would ensure its independence, and felt that this could be achieved by excluding Communists and Marxists from the party, and by making clear that "the party stood for private property . . . and democratic freedoms . . . and against dictatorships . . . even the dictatorship of the workers." He also supported Chādirchī's views as regards the English who

> should be given to understand . . . that our party while opposing British imperialism . . . has for object the strengthening of the friendship between the Iraqi and British peoples and that, in our view, the elimination of imperialist interests . . . would redound to the British people's own advantage and that, further, our party is inclined to democratic socialism . . . and is more in favour of its spread in the world than of the predominance of the Soviet system.[362]

Ḥusain Jamīl essentially seconded Muḥammad Ḥadīd, but objected to any statement by the party of an anti-Soviet character. No useful purpose would be served, he said, from antagonizing Communist states "which are, in fact, elements against imperialism in the present international conflict, whereas social democratic governments (the existing French Cabinet, for example) fight movements of liberation." "It is necessary," he emphasized, "to distinguish between our party being non-Communist and our party being an organization for the resistance of communism. It is not the function of our party to oppose communism or Communists in Iraq or abroad."[363]

The left-winger Zakī ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb wondered whether the English government would really favor the coming to the political forefront in Iraq of men that differed qualitatively from the existing ruling stratum and "that genuinely represent the people and their aspirations and interests." "Imperialism," he went on, "is nowhere moved by idealistic sentiments or brotherly feelings between peoples but rests on complex and interweaving economic, commercial, and military interests." Inasmuch as "the first enemy . . . is not the ruling class but the English and our immediate objective... is to free the country from their influence. . . rather than to realize socialism," the "base of the national popular struggle must be wide and should embrace all the patriot elements whatever their colouring." He and the like-minded Ṭalʻat ash-Shaibānī, therefore, opposed the exclusion of "Marxists or others" from the ranks.[364] When in the end a majority of the Central Committee decided in effect to do just that and to adopt, but without public advertisement, "democratic socialism" as a guiding principle in explaining the party's program and in screening the party's membership, both Zakī ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb and Ṭalʻat ash-Shaibānī resigned. ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb could not refrain from voicing the conviction that what Chādirchī really desired was "to shirk the discomforts of national struggle and to clear the air between the party and the English and especially the ruling British Labour Party in the hope of bringing nearer the day of the party's assumption of power."[365]

It was not until 1950 that the party openly committed itself to "democratic socialism,"[366] but the commitment was in large degree verbal and involved no substantial change in the party's program except for an

agrarian amendment introduced in 1951, and aimed at "limiting big property to a reasonable extent and distributing excess lands to peasants organized in cooperative societies . . . . "[367] By that time the party had become more cohesive and more pliant to the purposes of its leadership, but also markedly smaller in size. Otherwise it continued to be partly oriented to Iraq's new industrialist class or, to put it differently, the industrialist class continued to have a foothold in the party. As a matter of fact, from late 1946 to the beginning of the demise of the National Democrats in 1960, two members of the party's Central Committee were industrialists: Muḥammad Ḥadīd and Rajab ʻAlī aṣ-Ṣaffār. When the Federation of Iraqi Industries was founded in 1956, both became members of its Administrative Council. Aṣ-Ṣaffār, who was a Baghdādī and an owner of a silk factory, was also elected as the Federation's vice-chairman. One other prominent National Democrat, Khaddūrī Khaddūrī of the Cotton Seeds Products Company, was a member in reserve of the Administrative Council.[368] More than that, the left-winger Ṭalʻat ash-Shaibānī served as a secretary in the Office of the Federation. All this should explain the sensitivity of the party to the needs and anxieties of the industrialists, and in particular to their feeling of inadequate protection, in the last decade of the monarchy, against the flow of competitive Western manufactured goods, and their realization of the necessity of a certain redistribution of income in the countryside from the standpoint of a wider domestic market for the products of their own factories.[369]

Significantly, the industrialists never prospered as much as under ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim (1958-1963),[370] whose economic and financial policies were, to no little degree, inspired by National Democrats or, to be precise, by Muḥammad Ḥadīd, who, in those years, wielded influence in the government even when he was out of office.

By 1962 Chādirchī himself, with whom Ḥadīd broke in 1960 to form his own National Progressive party, had begun to question whether the vague socialism of Ḥadīd's youthful years had not washed away. "The net earnings of the Vegetable Oil Extraction Company, which Ḥadīd directs, have climbed," Chādirchī said, "to a record. Ḥadīd's socialism and progressivism derive from his education. But can a person remain progressive while his interests are growing bigger? I cannot say. The key to

the answer lies in this: as far as it is possible for a big capitalist to be clean and idealist, Ḥadīd is clean and idealist."[371]

The basic thrust of the preceding few sections of this chapter has been to lay emphasis on the relationship, in the period of the British occupation and under the monarchy, between oppositional movements and trading families that had been depressed or unfavorably affected by the advance of the West's might and capital, or families that had become connected with Iraq's young industry and whose interests did not accord with the extremely low purchasing power of the bulk of the population or with the policy of half-hearted protectionism that the government pursued in the forties and fifties. But what about the political role of the mercantile and moneyed families that benefited economically from the existing order of things?

The upper layers of the Jewish trading class–the main beneficiaries until 1948–were, from the British conquest of Baghdād in 1917 to the end of the "Mandate" in 1932, wholly comfortable with British policy. In political matters, their representatives in Parliament[372] and the financier Sassoon Ḥasqail, who was marked out as the Jewish holder of the portfolio of finance in the cabinets of the first half of the twenties, approved what the British approved and opposed what the British opposed.[373] This, in a sense, was a natural result of the British government's own line of conduct: "The elements that we most need to encourage," the British civil commissioner had written as early as 1918, "are, firstly, the Jewish community in Baghdād."[374] After 1932 the Jewish merchants kept consistently out of politics. Their objective circumstances rendered any other course untenable. At the same time, some of them–the wealthier sort-were well connected. For example, the Zilkhas, who parlayed a *ṣairafah* or money-lending business worth only 100 pounds sterling in 1899 into a financial house with branches at Cairo, Alexandria, Beirut, and Damascus, and assets of about 10 million pounds sterling in 1948, were bankers for Nūrī as-Saʻīd and the royal family. To the king, the Zilkhas showed their liberal side when occasions offered: when he went on a visit to Egypt, for example, they placed a country house and horses at his disposal.[375] Again, Ḥaīm Nathāniel, a transportation contractor and a millionaire, was a personal friend of the oftentime premier, Jamīl-al-Midfaʻī. The Lāwīs, for their part, greased the palms of high state officials in order to protect or facilitate their automobile trade. In his memoirs, Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah recalls how,

when as minister of supply in 1948, he found it necessary to purchase a private car, the representative of the Lāwīs brought to his attention that "it has been the practice to reduce prices for their Excellencies the Ministers and especially the Minister of Supply" and that his firm was prepared to make the reductions that Kubbah himself might wish to suggest.[376] This, to be sure, was not something that the Lāwīs alone did, but one of the more common and convenient methods by which men of commerce bought influence or curried favor with the men in power.

Wealthy Moslem merchants were, comparatively speaking, more involved than monetarily potent Jews in the net of politics. In the period 1921-1958, out of the total of 575 ministerial appointments, 95 or 16.5 percent went to members of mercantile families[377] and, of these, 84 were held by Moslems.[378] Except in few instances, the fitness of the incumbents rested more on their purse than on their ability. They were also drawn from an extremely narrow circle: as many as 59 of the 84 appointments, or 70.2 percent, went to members of only 6 families–the families of Chālabī, Pāchachī,[379] Ja'far, Baṣṣām, Mirjān, and Shallāsh.[380])

Significantly, of the twenty-three moneyed families that in 1958 stood at the pinnacle in the realms of trade, finance, and industry (see Table 9-13), only two–two Pāchachīs and Mirjāns–provided premiers, and two others–the Chalabīs and Ḥadīds–state ministers other than premiers. One, 'Abd-uj-Jabbār Maḥmūd's, was related to the royal house: 'Abd-uj-Jabbār was the husband of Princess Rājiḥah, sister of King Ghāzī. Six families merely served in the Senate or the Chamber of Deputies, while the rest, who constituted more than half (see Table 9-14), and five of whom were Christian and one Jewish, had no formal connection with the state whatever. More importantly, although these twenty-three families possessed between them, as has been noted, assets amounting to the equivalent of not less than 56 percent of the whole private corporate commercial and industrial capital of the country–a concentration enhanced by the pattern of marriage alliances[381]–they did not carry decisive weight in the government. This is true even of those among them who rose to the premiership or drew close to the inner ring of power. Part of the explanation lies in their recent ascent to great wealth. Other reasons have been adequately set out on preceding pages.[382]

TABLE 9-14

The Principal Capitalist Families in 1958[a] and Their Representation in Parliament and Share of Ministerial Appointments under the Monarchy

Name of family	No. of deputies	No. of times elected	No. of premiers	No. of appointments to premiership	No. of state ministers	No. of ministerial appointments
Fattāḥ	1	6	–	–	–	–
Chalabī	3	13	–	–	4	17
Garibian	–	–	–	–	–	–
Dāmirchī	1	1	–	–	–	–
Khuḍairī	6	17	–	–	–	–
Mirjān	1	6	1	1	1	6
Ṣābūnjī	2	3	–	–	–	–
Luṭfī ('Abdullah)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Yūnis (al-Ḥājj Hāshim)	2	7	–	–	–	–
Ibrahīm (al-Ḥājj Ṣāliḥ)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Markarian (Iskandar Stefān)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Ḥanna ash-Shaikh	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lāwī	–	–	–	–	–	–
Baghdādī ('Abd-ul-'Azīz)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Bahoshi	–	–	–	–	–	–
Ḥasso	–	–	–	–	–	–
Maḥmūd ('Abd-uj-Jabbār)[b]	1	1	–	–	–	–
Ḥadīd	2	4	–	–	1	1
Aṣ-Ṣarrāf ('Abd-ul-Amīr)	–	–	–	–	–	–
Pāchachī	4	11	2	3	4	13
al-Qādī (Ḥāfiḍh)	–	–	–	–	–	–
ad-Dahwī	1	1	–	–	–	–
Makiyyah	–	–	–	–	–	–

Summary

	No. of families	Percent
Family connected with royal house	1	4.3
Families that provided premiers	2	8.7
Families that provided state ministers other than premiers	2	8.7
Families that merely provided deputies	6	26.1
Other families	12	52.2
Total	23	100.0

[a]See Table 9-13.

[b]'Abd-uj-Jabbār Maḥmūd was the husband of Princess Rājiḥah, sister of King Ghāzī.

It must be added that, despite their noninvolvement in crucial governmental decision making, the richest of the Moslem capitalists were men of the highest connections which, coupled with their pliancy toward whatever powers held sway–the attitude of a few excepted–indubitably assisted the progress of their affairs.

The history of the Khuḍairīs, who began as grain merchants and then became proprietors, among other things, of river steamers and a brewery,[383] is characteristic in this regard. In Ottoman times, the foremost representative of the family, ʻAbd-ul-Qāder, was on such a good footing with the authorities that Sultan ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd bestowed upon him in 1900 the title of Pāsha.[384] But after the Revolution of 1908, he drew near to the Young Turks and headed the Club of the Committee of Union and Progress at Baghdād. Moreover, according to the British intelligence records, in 1910 and 1911 he was "hand-in-glove" with Governor Nāḍhim Pāsha and obtained from him "a very valuable monopoly" in the grain trade. As only followed, when the British gained control of the country, he lost no time in bending over backwards to get on terms of "intimate friendship" with them.[385] Qāsim al-Khuḍairī, a brother of ʻAbd-ul-Qāder, who had, it would appear, voiced the view at an early point in the First World War that it was useless for the Iraqis to fight against the British till it became clear how the fortunes of the conflict would turn,[386] stood out now as the family's most active supporter of the British regime. "I still recall," wrote later ʻAlī Āl Bāzirgān, a leader of the independence movement of 1920,

> the day [in 1919] when I went to the Karkh side of Baghdād and saw Qāsim al-Khuḍairī at the head of the bridge. Pointing to a paper in his hand, he was shouting: "If you want freedom, sign here." I said to him: "What is this, Abū Jamīl?" and took the paper from his hand. It read: "We the people of Baghdād wish Mr. Percy Cox to be king over Iraq and our independence to come under the protection of Britain . . . .[387]

But while Qāsim al-Khuḍairī was running with the British, Yāsīn, another brother of ʻAbd-ul-Qāder, was holding with the nationalists,[388] so that whatever the outcome of the independence movement was, there would always be someone on the right side to defend the interests of the family. The same motive drew Nājī al-Khuḍairī increasingly into the orbit of Nūrī

as-Saʻīd in the period of the monarchy and explains why, after the founding of the republic in 1958, ʻAbd-ul-Munʻim, Nājī's cousin, played up to the grain- and river-barge-broker Ḥāmid, the brother of General ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, and associated him with every undertaking he set his hands to.

The Chalabīs,[389] who commanded assets which ʻAbd-ul-Hādī, the present head of the family, put in the early sixties at nine million dīnārs[390] and who have since transferred much of their activity to the Gulf, are another case in point. They were one of the few Shīʻī families that maintained excellent relations with the Ottoman government.[391] Their ancestor ʻAlī ach-Chalabī was the tax-farmer of the town of Kāḍhimiyyah. A very harsh man, he kept a bodyguard of armed slaves and had a special prison at his disposal. When he died, the people of Kāḍhimiyyah heaved a sigh of relief.[392] His son ʻAbd-ul-Ḥusain, who became the chairman of the board of the Kāḍhimiyyah-Baghdād Tramway, held in the twenties a portfolio in almost every Cabinet because, in the words of the oriental secretary to the British high commissioner, he was both "reliable and accommodating."[393] His grandson ʻAbd-ul-Hādī got in 1938 in the good graces of the regent-to-be, ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh, by coming to his assistance with loans. The prince, who had a passion for gambling at the races, never repaid ʻAbd-ul-Hādī[394] but in due course made him a minister of public works and eventually the vice-president of the Senate. For his part, ʻAbd-ul-Hādī's brother, Muḥammad ʻAlī, rose to the directorship of the government's Rāfidain Bank and, on account of the considerable importance of this institution in the financial field, attained in the mid-fifties almost dictatorial power on Bank Street. In the meantime, ʻAbd-ul-Hādī had become the principal agent of Andrew Weir & Co., a British firm which from 1939 to 1952 occupied the foremost position in the barley trade. Richer in money, he plunged next into land speculations in a big way, and simultaneously expanded his interests in many directions,[395] making good use of the knowledge and connections that his official appointments brought him. Thus, by translating economic power into political influence, and political influence into economic power, the Chalabīs climbed from one level of wealth to another, and on the eve of the 1958 Revolution surpassed other business families, at least, in easily realizable capital.

Again, without the right connections, Nūrī Fattāḥ, the king of Iraq's textile industry and its first modern manufacturer, could not have parlayed a

spinning and weaving mill with a capital of only 13,500 dīnārs in 1926 into a company with assets of one-and-a-half million dīnārs in 1963.[396] This is not meant to depreciate in any way the importance of his initiative, or of the zeal or mental or nervous energy which he brought to his undertakings, but these factors by themselves would not have led very far. What was crucial in his growth was the fact that for upwards of two decades he and his brother-in-law, al-Ḥājj Ṣāliḥ Ibrahīm,[397] had a monopoly in the provision of woolen clothing to the Iraqi army and police. He could not have secured this advantage were it not for a number of favorable contributory circumstances. First, his father, Fattāḥ Pāshā, the son of a Turkified Arab and an unlicensed veterinarian from Tis'īn, a village to the southwest of Kirkūk, and the owner of sailing ships and 2,700 dūnums of land, had been a lieutenant general and a commander of a division in the Ottoman army. Second, his brother, Sulaimān, had served for a time as aide-de-camp to the minister of defence, and in the second half of the twenties was the commandant of the Military Academy.[398] Third, al-Ḥājj Ṣāliḥ Ibrahīm, his Turkish brother-in-law and partner until the mid-thirties, had been, before World War I, the director of a modern weaving factory belonging to the Ottoman forces. Fourth, Nūrī Fattāḥ himself had been an army officer from 1912 to 1916, and knew personally many of the men in power from his days as a member of the clandestine military society *al-'Ahd*. More than that, Nūrī as-Sa'īd had been his private tutor in 1907-1908, and the "chief road-companion"–*ar-ra'īs ar-rafīq*–in the forty-day trip he made in 1909 from Baghdād to the military academy at Isṭanbūl. Obviously, but for these facts, it would not have been easy for Nūrī Fattāḥ to obtain the army and police contracts that were year after year the animating breath of his factory. He also benefited from the enlightened policy of Faiṣal I (1921-1933), who stood for the support of "indigenous (industrial) entrepreneurs in a practical and effective manner" and, in a revealing memorandum, observed that he would "rather see the building of a mill than of a royal palace."[399] Indeed, in 1930, he decided to extend to Nūrī Fattāḥ, whose enterprise was in need of an injection of cash, a loan from army funds to the tune of 150,000 rupees or 11,250 dīnārs, but the British ambassador overrode the king's decision. However, Faiṣal contributed shares to the Iraq Ginnery, which Nūrī Fattāḥ and others founded subsequently. The king also promised to participate monetarily in the Iraq Cement Co., which came into being only in 1935,

that is, after Faiṣal's death, and counted among its founders, aside from Fattāḥ, Premier Yasīn al-Hāshimī; the ex-Premiers Jamīl al-Midfa'ī, 'Alī Jawdat al-Ayyubī, and Ja'far al-'Askarī; and the future Premier Muzāḥim al-Pāchachī.[400] When to this interweaving of his interests with those of the upper layers of the political class in the twenties and thirties are added the boom profits of his factory and other enterprises in World War II, occasioned by the sharp drop in the import of textiles and other manufactured articles, it is not difficult to understand how from little beginnings Nūrī Fattāḥ wound up as a multimillionaire. True, in the last decade of the monarchy, he suffered more than any other manufacturer from the dumping–while the government looked the other way–of European fabrics at low prices. Moreover, Nūrī as-Sa'īd made him pay dearly for criticisms he leveled against him. "I will rather clothe the army in Gawānī jute," he warned him, "than clothe it from your factory;" and, passing from words to deed, he launched in 1953 the state-controlled Woollen Textile Co., and gave it the army and police contracts formerly monopolized by Nūrī Fattāḥ and his brother-in-law. But by this time Fattāḥ's business had become extensive and diversified.[401] He, therefore, succeeded in weathering the blow and holding his own.[402]

Enough has been said about the Moslem capitalist families that stood at the very peak of wealth in 1958. Information concerning the richest of the Christian merchants is much scantier. This is because of their secretiveness and reticence. However, it is a matter of common knowledge that they had partnerships or close business ties with the Moslem big men of commerce and sat in the same political protective shadows in which these men reposed.

It should not go unmentioned that under the monarchy the bulk of the merchants, while keeping in close touch with the workings of government, possessed an innate distrust of anything connected with politics. In fact, they held in contempt most of the professional politicians who, from their point of view, could easily be manipulated by oiling their palms or were, as one man of business put it, "dogs and one best deals with dogs by tossing bones to them."

10

THE CROWN AND THE EX-SHARĪFIAN OFFICERS

Aside from a small number of civilians–notably Rustum Ḥaidar, a former school headmaster with a degree in politics from the Sorbonne, a scion of an Arab Shī‘ī landed family of Ba‘labakk, and the private secretary and chief of Dīwān of Faiṣal I–the ex-Sharīfians had been officers in the Ottoman army. They counted about three hundred in all[1] and, with few exceptions, were of the Sunni sect and hailed from Baghdād or the northern half of the country. The strength of the bond tying them to the throne differed according to individual circumstances, but from this standpoint it is useful to distinguish between the later recruits to the Sharīfian cause, that is, the officers who joined Faiṣal's service in Syria after the end of the war with the Turks in October of 1918, and the earlier volunteers who rallied from the beginning to the revolt raised in 1916 by Faiṣal's father, Sharīf Ḥusain of Mecca, or took an active part in the ensuing desert campaigns and, of necessity, became more closely identified with the Sharīfian family and its interests. Indeed, some of the later recruits did not lend their support in 1921 to Faiṣal's candidacy for the throne of Iraq. To the same post–1918 group belonged Bakr Ṣidqī, who pulled the 1936 coup, and apparently contemplated doing away with the kingship altogether.[2] Of course, Faiṣal relied, in the first place, on the officers who fought for him longest or stood by his side through danger or adversity–on such men, in other words, as Ja‘far al-‘Askarī, Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, Jamīl al-Midfa‘ī, and ‘Alī Jawdat al-Ayyūbī, all of whom rose eventually to the premiership.

Although, after the founding of the monarchy in 1921, many of the ex-Sharīfian officers stepped into important posts in the government and the army, and gained commensurately in status, none descended from families of wealth or social position, save for Amīn al-‘Umarī, commander of the Baghdād district and of the First Division from 1937 to 1940; Maḥmūd as-

Sinawī, governor of Baghdād in 1932; and the oftentimes Minister of Justice Jamāl Bābān. Significantly, the others did not bear hereditary surnames in Ottoman times, these being still unfixed except among the higher class.[3] Thus Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, who was born to a *mudaqqiqchī*, a minor government auditor, used his father’s personal name as his family name. So did ‘Alī Jawdat al-Ayyūbī, who was born to a chief sergeant in the gendarmerie. Ja‘far al-‘Askarī, the son of an Ottoman brigadier, took his last name from the name of the place of origin of his family, that is, from ‘Askar, a Kurdish village in the province of Kirkūk. Being an artillerist, Jamīl al-Midfa‘ī derived his surname from his profession.

Stemming, as they did, from the middle or lower middle classes, or from more modest origins, the ex-Sharīfian officers, as a whole, were, in the twenties and earlier years, scarcely sympathetic to the wealthy or established families. To a 1916 complaint by Sharīf Ḥusain that his sons were finding support in the towns “only among the third class of people,” one of the Sharīfian officers-to-be replied that the thing was “natural and necessary.” “The men of fame,” he added, “are famous by dint of their riches . . . which they acquired without right and through injustice to others .... The public question is of no interest to them. They may even regard it as a danger to themselves . . . . ”[4] A similar thread of thought underlies the attribution, three decades later, of patriotism exclusively to “the middle class, the common people, and the remnants of the leadership of the [1920] uprising” by Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, one of the younger post-1918 Sharīfian recruits and the moving spirit behind the 1941 military movement.[5] By that time, many of the senior ex-Sharīfians no longer formed part of the middle strata of society. They had become propertied and, therefore, tied by material bonds to the upper class and socially entrenched families.

But in the twenties, even the senior ex-Sharīfian officers were, in the context of the times, rather radical in their temper and ideas. As a matter of fact, they were in this respect akin to the military Young Turks. Though they came under the influence of rival national feelings, the one group as well as the other had been, it should be remembered, animated by the same aversion for the rule of Sultan ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, the same anxiety about the dilapidated condition of the Ottoman Empire, and the same ardent but

untutored desire for reform. They were both, after all, the product of the same European-oriented military learning and the same military academies.

The ex-Sharīfians were naturally affected by the new tendencies of thought arising from their involvement in the incipient process of Europeanization. These tendencies were, it must be admitted, still inchoate and not deeply ingrained or intensely felt. Their direction was also often not clear or definite. Most of the ex-Sharīfians hardly grasped their real meaning or their implications for society, and not all sensed their vibrations in the same way or were involved in them to the same degree. Apart from an attachment or an inclination to the idea of national independence or national union, a sense was taking hold of them that the new elements of culture emanating from Europe were an emancipation or something inherently superior, while continued adherence to the old modes of life implied futility and frustration. They were also influenced by another idea that was in the air, and that had its origin in the period of the Young Turks. We first encounter this idea, but in an extreme form, in notes written by Ismaʻīl Ḥaqqī Babān, a deputy for Baghdād, and published in Turkish in 1910. It is there almost casually advanced as a solution for the pervasive backwardness in the tribal country. "As long as the government," said Babān, "will not interfere in the private life of the inhabitants and concern itself with their lodging, with their food even, as long as they will not be led by force and against their wishes towards progress like soldiers, there will be here neither prosperity nor civilization. They must be led and with a strong hand."[6] What Babān proposed, in other words, was to transform the inhabitants into some kind of an army and the government into an army instructor, nurse, and leader. The ex-Sharīfian officers, who served Faiṣal I and formed a mainstay of his regime, may not have gone so far in their ideas, but they had something of Babān's martial temper and shared his partiality for a forced social change, for a push from above, so to say. It is to them–and other semi-Europeanized urban ruling elements–that Faiṣal referred when he observed in his Confidential Memorandum of March 1933:

> The young men of Iraq, who run the government, and at their head a great number of those in positions of responsibility, believe that no consideration should be given to the opinion of fanatics and holders of

> traditional views . . . and that the country should be driven forward and the people raised to an appropriate level of life without regard to any opinion... so long as law and force are the government's and it can coerce all to abide by what it dictates.
>
> To ignore opinion–no matter how insignificant it may be–is an unforgivable sin. If government commanded enough visible force to lead the people against their will, I would have been disposed to agree with them but until such a force becomes available, we have to proceed without disturbing the traditions of the people and in a manner somewhat agreeable to them so that they would have sympathy for their government in times of affliction.[7]

From Faiṣal's observations it is reasonable to infer, after taking due account of the differences in consciousness engendered by the events and experiences of intervening decades, that the ex-Sharīfian officers who in the twenties helped to build the monarchy were as desirous and as restless for change as the army officers who in 1958 destroyed it. But what was crucial in the twenties was that the ex-Sharīfians were too thinly or too precariously based, and the forces of conservatism comparatively too strong–and then there were the demands of British imperial policy–so that instead of the ex-Sharīfians subduing the old social order, it tended in some respects to subdue and assimilate them, giving them a stake in its perpetuation, and passing on to them some of its conservative temper.

But, under Faiṣal I, the ex-Sharīfian officers had to contend with opposition from the side of the established families, who found it difficult to suffer with equanimity the abrupt ascent to influence of men whom they regarded as upstarts. "Who is so and so that he should become a minister or a *mutaṣarrif?* His father was only a sergeant or a grocer," they complained.[8] In 1922 forty shaikhs and aghas insisted that the king should select for government "only those who have the nobility of race and birth."[9] The old "aristocracy" of officials resented the competition for the high offices of the state that they now had to face. There was also a feeling that many of the ex-Sharīfian officers had been away for years and could not be expected to have a good understanding of the real needs of the country.

This opposition from shaikhs, *sādah,* and old bureaucrat- *mallāks* was one of the factors that held the ex-Sharīfian officers together during the

reign of Faiṣal I. Another critical cohesive factor was their shared experiences. A large number of them had in the past worked in concert not only in the Ḥijaz campaigns but also in the clandestine *Al-ʻAhd* Society: *Al-ʻAhd* (The Covenant), which was organized in 1913 and aspired at an autonomous status for the Arabs within the Ottoman Empire, embraced no fewer than 315 out of the 490 Arab officers that lived in Isṭanbūl in 1914,[10] not to mention the support that it attracted among the Arab military element at Mosul, Baghdād, and Baṣrah. More than that, many of the ex-Sharīfian officers were linked by blood relationships or marital unions. For example, Ibrahīm ar-Rāwī, the commander of the Fourth Division from 1937 to 1941, Jamīl ar-Rāwī, the minister of communications in 1930, and Rashīd al-Khawjah, the minister of defence in 1932-1933 and 1934-1935 were all ex-Sharīfian officers and all first cousins. They were also related to the tribe of Jumailah, to which belonged Jamīl al-Wādī and Shākir al-Wādī, both ex-Sharīfian officers, and the one a minister of justice in 1932-1933 and the other a minister of defence in 1946-1947 and 1948-1952. Similarly, Jaʻfar al-ʻAskarī, a prime minister; his elder brother ʻAlī Riḍā, a military commander; and his younger brother Taḥsīn, a minister of the interior, were all ex-Sharīfian officers. Moreover, Jaʻfar al-ʻAskarī and Nūrī as-Saʻīd were married to each other's sisters, and the wife of Taḥsīn al-ʻAskarī was the sister of the wife of Ibrahīm Kamāl, another ex-Sharīfian officer. Again, the mother of Jamīl al-Midfaʻī was from the family of al-Ḥājj Sirrī, which had a matrimonial tie with the family of ʻAlī Jawdat al-Ayyūbī.

But what, above all, helped the social advancement of the ex-Sharīfian officers was their joining of fortunes with Faiṣal I and the House of the Hashemites. However, from this flowed not only their rising influence but also the inherent instability of their position. The explanation lies in the precariousness and somewhat ambiguous character of the Crown and the ambivalent attitudes that it aroused.

Initially, at least, no strong bonds tied Faiṣal I to his subjects. His, after all, was a new kingship, and lacked in the history or traditions of Iraq the roots that could have given it nourishment or afforded it that elusive force which is prestige. His family, to be sure, was, according to the Meccan genealogical roll, of the thirty-fifth generation in direct descent from Ḥasan, grandson of the Prophet, and sought to make the most of this claim.

On the other hand, there was no paucity of *ashrāf* in Iraq, and the old respect for them had, as noted on other pages, already visibly diminished. True, Faiṣal was also a hero of the Meccan Revolt, but many Iraqis had all along had their doubts about that undertaking. As late as July 1923 a petition, bearing the seals of about four hundred personages, appealed to the Ottoman Caliph "for the deliverance of Iraq from the foreigners . . . and from Faiṣal and his father who came to dominate over the Moslems by fighting in the ranks of the Allies and by disuniting the Moslems under the cloak of Arab nationalism in disobedience of the order of God which says: 'The believers are brothers.'"[11] Significantly, in the mosques of Baghdād, the Friday *khuṭbah*[12] continued until 1924 to call for prayers by the people for the Ottoman Caliph in both his spiritual and temporal capacity, despite protests by Faiṣal that the unaltered *khuṭbah* was an insult to himself.[13]

But what was most damaging to the moral authority of the Crown was the fact that it derived its original force from the will of Iraq's conquerors. The English tried to keep from the people that it was they who had chosen Faiṣal for the throne, and did their best to engineer his election as "quietly and unostentatiously"[14] as possible. But it was difficult to cover up the reality that were it not for support by British power, the monarchy could scarcely exist.

Faiṣal himself, who was the shrewdest of the Hashemites, perfectly understood his situation. Before his enthronement on 23 August 1921, the English had put before him a proposal for the inclusion in a projected Organic Law of a clause leaving the final word in Iraq's internal affairs with their high commissioner. "We do not wish Faiṣal to be able to say (after he has been crowned) that he did not realise what degree of control we expect him to submit to," had telegraphed their secretary of state for the colonies.[15] But Faiṣal took strong objection to the proposal. "Apart from my personal ideals in the direction of Arab nationality," he told the high commissioner,

> I am an instrument of British policy. His Majesty's Government and I are in the same boat and must sink or swim together .... Having, so to speak, chosen me, you must treat me as one of yourselves and I must be trusted as His Majesty's Government trust you and if you wish me and your policy to succeed, it is folly to damn me permanently in the public eye by making me an obvious puppet as might be . . . . Much

> more is it to your interests to show at once that I am really King, that I am trusted, and that you are ready to support me. I undertake to be guided by your advice in all important matters.[16]

But Faiṣal insisted that the high commissioners's views should be imparted to him privately and, if he concurred with them, presented by him to Iraqis as his own ideas.[17]

Obviously, in the early years of his reign, Faiṣal needed the English. Without their support, he would have sunk. But he knew that the English also needed him. If only for financial reasons, they had to exercise their control indirectly and lull the Iraqis into a fictitious sense of independence. "I have no doubt personally," the secretary of state for the colonies, Winston Churchill, had wired from Cairo to his prime minister in March of 1921,

> that Faiṣal offers far away best chance of saving our money. . . . Incredible waste now proceeding in Mesopotamia can only be cured by driving large number of troops and followers out of country and off our pay list.... We have to carry everybody back sooner or later and keeping them waiting eating up our mutton is pure waste.[18]

As time went on, and particularly after the discovery of immense quantities of oil in the northern part of the country, the value of Faiṣal, from England's standpoint, palpably increased. "The loss of Faiṣal's goodwill and cooperation (to say nothing of his covert hostility)," remarked in 1927 the Middle East Department of the Colonial Office, "would render our task almost impossible."[19]

Such considerations did not escape Faiṣal. Therefore, just as the English used him to forward their interests, he tried to use their need of him to build his own position, often at their expense. Moreover, while turning their military presence, as best as practicable, to his advantage, he sought to strike roots in native soil and to free himself, as far as he could, from the workings of the colonial policy in which he had become involved.

To the dismay of the English, he took an attitude of independence scarcely six months after his coronation. Realizing that the long-range interests of his House lay in identifying himself with the feelings and hopes

of his people, he refused to consent to a "mandatory" relation for Iraq even in "a camouflaged form." "If you insist," he told the high commissioner in February of 1922, "on the proposal to 'mandate' us, I. . . cannot accept the odium and responsibility of being associated with such a policy and you will need an army strong enough to impose your will upon an unwilling people." He, however, made plain that he needed Britain "not as a mandatory but as an ally and friend."[20] At the same time, Faiṣal, supported by the ex-Sharīfian officers and by uncompromising Shī'ī *'ulamā'* and nationalist elements, encouraged the anti-Mandate sentiment that had been building up, and that led to popular unrest in the summer of 1922, so much so that the English took for granted that "all that was needed to stop the unrest was a clear indication from Faiṣal himself." Matters reached such a pass that in the British Cabinet the opinion was expressed that "if it became necessary eventually to withdraw from Iraq, Faiṣal should not be allowed to remain there in any case."[21] Actually, Faiṣal had drifted into a confrontation with the English which he could not afford. He was still too dependent upon them, and had ultimately to submit to the shackles of the "Mandate" and come into the open in favor of a treaty that only thinly disguised Iraq's semicolonial status.

By deferring to the English, Faiṣal alienated popular opinion. Nor was his position made any better by the banishment in 1923 of the anti-treaty Shī'ī *'ulamā'*, or by the pretext given for a measure so serious and which he had only reluctantly approved. The *'ulamā'* had succeeded in bringing to a standstill the processes of election to a Constituent Assembly convoked, essentially, with a view to ratifying the treaty, but were exiled on the basis of a decree that invested the government with the power to deport "aliens" for political offences, although the principal men of religion involved[22] were Arabs and not Persians. "If the King," countered the opposition in a protest addressed to the foreign consuls in Baghdād, "pretends that the *'ulamā'* are 'aliens', then this epithet must be applied also to him because he is a Ḥijāzī by origin and his Prime Minister–'Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa'dūn–although a Muntafiqi is a Ḥijāzī . . . . Moreover, all the King's suite are aliens."[23]

Suffering the buffets of the English on the one side and the national opposition on the other, Faiṣal could now enlarge the sphere of his authority only subtly and gradually. Inasmuch as the appearance of power is not completely separable from its substance, by clinging to the one, he acquired

more and more of the other, edging the English, whenever opportunity offered, out of a degree after degree of their influence. Simultaneously, he kept his hand on the political pulse of the country and, while leaning on the ex-Sharīfian officers–now the backbone of Iraq's new army–he maintained contact with all existing forces and shades of opinion, and placed himself publicly above rivalries between parties, sects, or tribal combinations.

By 1927 Faiṣal felt the ground firm enough under his feet to bid defiance to British policy. A critical trial of strength began between him and High Commissioner Henry Dobbs that was to last until 1929. The real bone of contention was the control of Iraq's military defence. The British government, while desiring that the extra cost of stationing a British air force be borne by Iraq, and giving the king reason to believe that this force would not be available to him in the event of external aggression–or at least to suspect a letdown in an emergency–insisted on retaining ultimate say with regard to the movements and dispositions of Iraq's own army. Faiṣal and the principal ex-Sharīfian officers refused to yield on either point. Moreover, in order to strengthen the defensive capacity of the country and curtail its expenditure, they sought to substitute universal military service for the existing voluntary system. But, as shown elsewhere, the high commissioner defeated their purpose.

The sequel bears examination, inasmuch as it throws into sharp relief the difficulties of the Crown, the complexity of the interests at play, the tactics of the English, and Faiṣal's own methods.

Faced with a political agitation for universal military service and complete independence, inspired by the king and spearheaded by such ex-Sharīfians as Nūrī as-Sa'īd[24] and Jamīl al-Midfa'ī,[25] the high commissioner deemed it "most desirable" that "means should be found of getting His Majesty away from Baghdād."[26] An invitation to visit London was extended to him in a message which was couched in such terms as to leave the impression with the king that a revision of existing policy was intended.

Faiṣal departed for England in August of that year, and there was left in a state of uncertainty for almost four months, only to be doled out scraps of concessions in the end. But more instructive were the things that went on in Iraq and behind his back.

In the first place, Amīn ach-Charchafchī, the leader of the Shī'ī-inclined Nahḍah party, opened a fierce attack on Faiṣal and the Iraq government in

his paper *An-Nahḍah*, which he began to publish soon after the king's departure.[27] The bitter articles were calculated to provoke communal animosity and embitter the feelings between Shī'īs and Sunnīs. They dwelt upon and exaggerated past conflicts and old grievances. Simultaneously there was a surreptitious agitation against the Sunnī dominance of the government and for the continuance of undiminished British control. The chief Shī'ī '*ulamā*' refused to give countenance to these activities. Charchafchī himself left no doubt as to the side from which he was receiving encouragement: "It is commonly believed throughout the Euphrates," affirmed a British intelligence report

> that His Excellency the High Commissioner is supporting the Shī'ī agitation and Amīn Ach-Charchafchī in his conversation has always managed to convey this impression. For instance, when talking to Shaikh Aḥmad Ad-Dāūd on 17th September [1927] he said that His Excellency had made him some promises regarding the Shī'īs and that he intended visiting him on his return. Also Shaikh Jawād Al-Jawāhirī told the Inspector of Police, Najaf, that they were anxiously waiting for the return of His Excellency and that they were "ready to beat the drum" if he wished them to do so.[28]

When on October 22, 1927, the Iraqi cabinet ordered *An-Nahḍah* closed down on the ground that it was creating dissension among the people, the action of the cabinet was pointed out to Faiṣal by Henry Dobbs in London as "a glaring instance of an avoidance of consultation with the High Commissioner and British advisers."[29]

In the second place, prominent Sunnī *'ulamā'*– and this is a stratum that was, as a rule, politically quiescent–began suddenly to discuss the desirability of a republic. Involved were Ibrahīm al-Ḥaidarī, 'Abd-ul-Jalīl Aḥmad Jamīl, Ibrahīm ar-Rāwī, Ismā'īl al-Wā'iḍh, 'Abd-ul-Wah-hāb al-Khaṭīb, and others. They endeavored to gain influence among the Shī'īs with the object of sounding them as to their possible attitude toward such a project. "It is understood," maintained a British intelligence report, "that they have been encouraged by articles which have appeared in the British press but will be governed by the attitude His Excellency the High

Commissioner takes up with regard to His Majesty the King on his return and will not do anything unless they are sure of British support."[30]

In the third place, a number of influential *mallāks* of Baṣrah revived their old demand for "a separate Baṣrah under British protection." The promoters of the movement[31] "insinuated" that their cause had the support of ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn,[32] an oftentime premier who was generally considered to be specially favored by the British government.

In the fourth place, the Ikhwān of Najd, led by Faiṣal ad-Dawīsh, chief of the ʻIlwah Muṭayr, launched in this period repeated attacks on Iraq, which continued after Faiṣal's return from England. In one of the attacked encampments near Jumaimah, all the Iraqi shepherd tribesmen who fell into the hands of the Ikhwān were killed. The student of Iraqi history cannot help noticing that Dawīsh carried out his raids precisely on those occasions when the Iraqis or their government would not bend to British wishes, that is, in 1922, when the king stood against the "Mandate;" in 1924, when a powerful antitreaty opposition developed within the Constituent Assembly; and, lastly, in the circumstances now under discussion. It appears unlikely that Dawīsh should have attacked, at least in 1927-1928, unless he knew beforehand that the British air force, which was still committed by treaty to the defense of the Iraqi borders, would give him a free rein.[33] Interestingly enough, on 11 January 1929, the secretary of state for the colonies directed the high commissioner "to exercise [his] judgment in using the present situation on the Iraq-Nejd frontier to emphasize the necessity for the continuance of British support and the dependence of Iraq upon such support."[34]

Of course, the British did not create the separatist proclivities of Baṣrah's *mallāks* or the animosity of Shīʻīs and Sunnīs or of Saʻudīs and Hashemites. All these issues have their deeper causes. But it looks as if there were gentle British pushes with the elbow somewhere along the line.

As to how Faiṣal himself felt about all this, the following letter from the director of the British political police to the British adviser of Iraq's minister of interior–which, in view of the light it sheds on the thinking and methods of the king, is quoted here textually–is, I think, eloquent enough:

On the 2nd March [1928], in response to a telephone message, Amīn Chalabī ach-Charchafchī[35] visited the Palace where he remained for about

three hours. On his return he refused to tell anyone what had passed except that he had been granted an audience by His Majesty the King who had made him swear not to divulge what had passed.

However, on 3-3-28 he told Ḥajjī Ḥusain al-‘Allāwī[36] of the interview and of his oath to His Majesty the King but said he did not mind telling him of what had passed as he fully trusted him. He then stated that after the usual compliments, His Majesty had said that whatever had passed, he was convinced that he, Amīn Chalabī, had a clear conscience and loved “the sacred household–peace be upon them.” He did not believe that he had ever been against him and that his activities, even if they had been against the interests of the throne, had been in good faith. Amīn Chalabī had thanked His Majesty for this and assured him that as a Muslim he was required to support him as a descendant of the Prophet. His Majesty replied that he was aware of this and for this reason relied on him and after making him swear on the “Wilāyat Amīr al-Mu’minīn”[37] not to divulge what passed between them, except to persons he trusted as himself, said that Iraq was in great danger from the Ikhwān who were the bitter enemies of his house and of the Shī‘īs. With great emotion he showed how the Ikhwān were endeavouring to wipe out the sacred places of Islam and even the names of the Prophet’s household from the world. The present Cabinet, with Sir ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin at its head, will not defend the country for the following reasons:-

(1) There is insufficient force.

(2) He and all the Sa‘dūns are secretly in favour of Ibn Su‘ūd and secretly believe in Wahhābī doctrines.

(3) The British are supporting the Ikhwān and in fact have caused the latter to attack Iraq. If this were not so they would have allowed Iraq to have control of its army or their air force would have–ere this–dealt completely with them.

He said that the country was faced with a great danger and that they were responsible before God and His Messenger for the safety of the Tombs of the Holy Imāms and should therefore take immediate steps to safeguard that on which the life of their religion and home depends.

Amīn ach-Charchafchī said he was greatly affected with what His Majesty said and asked what he suggested should be done. His Majesty said he should think this matter over and should consult the *‘ulamā’* but urged upon him the need for the greatest possible care.

> His Majesty then spoke on the British and said they were against the progress of the country and gave details of the difficulties he had faced when in London owing to the attitude and opposition of Sir Henry Dobbs who, he said, had declared that the Iraq Shī‘īs and An-Nahḍah party were opposed to the monarchy and in favour of the British. He was, he said, quite aware that the British were the cause of all the friction and that his [Amīn's] dealings with the Residency had been in good faith. He went on at some length and then pointed out that the British had failed to make good their promises to the Shī‘īs.
>
> He said that Sir ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin, who would not object to anything the British did, had agreed with them to secure the election of a pro-British Parliament to facilitate British policy ....
>
> As up to the present Amīn ach-Charchafchī has, as far as I know, only related the above to Ḥajjī Ḥusain al-‘Allāwī, who in turn told my agent, there is need for the greatest possible care to prevent the discovery of the latter.[38]

Faiṣal's fears may or may not have been warranted, but he succeeded in neutralizing Charchafchī and his party. He also before long took up a firmer line. Through his Defence Minister Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, he made in October of 1928 "radical" demands which contemplated, among other things, an "immediate" assumption by Iraq of "full responsibility" for its defence; consent by its government to the nature and size of the British garrison; the complete elimination of any British say as regards the affairs of the Iraq army "in time of peace;" and the termination of the military agreement between the two countries in 1932. "The Iraq Government," said Nūrī, "could not be a party to pretence of advance, leaving British control practically unchanged."[39] Simultaneously, the king made the position of the British-supported Premier ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa‘dūn "impossible." "His Majesty," wrote the high commissioner in January of 1929, paraphrasing Sa‘dūn's own words, "had for the past six months at least been telling all the prominent people in the political world of Iraq that any one who accepted the principles of the Agreement would be a traitor to his country and now such a feeling had been produced that ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin Beg could not stand against it."[40] ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa‘dūn resigned, therefore, the premiership, and for the next three months (January to April of 1929) Iraq

remained without a responsible government. Faiṣal simply would not nominate a successor. When pressed by the high commissioner, he took the attitude that he could see no alternative to Sa‘dūn as prime minister, and that if he persuaded others to assume office, people would at once charge him with having intrigued against Sa‘dūn to bring in his own nominees, which would be derogatory to his prestige. In the end, the deadlock in the relations between the British government and the king was broken by a change in British policy, which found expression eventually in the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930. Though still restrictive of Iraq’s independence, the treaty spelled the end of the “Mandate” and surrendered to Iraq mastery over its armed forces.

Faiṣal never really danced to England’s piping, or at least was not the man to be reconciled to such a role. With the passage of time, fewer and fewer of his people came to question his genuine devotion to the interests of his adopted country. He achieved with their help, or in the face of their discontent, such measure of independence or liberty of action as could be realized under the circumstances. Unlike most of his contemporaries in Iraq, he was accessible to the finer points of political reality and looked further than the instant. He also clearly realized the importance of transforming the congeries of retarded, discordant, and self-regarding societies that was Iraq into a modern and harmonious state.[41] He himself had watched, perhaps not without some fascination, how easily the British pitted the varied forces of the country against each other, raising the hopes of the one, to break the resistance of the other. But the difficulties in his path were enormous. His financial resources, for one thing, were extremely meager: the total revenue of the government in the year of his accession to the throne was only £3.9 million, and in 1933, the year of his death, £4.1 million, compared with £129.3 million in 1958.[42] And then, there were the old habits of mind, the widespread illiteracy, the shortage of skills, the poor communications, the conflicting ethnic, religious, tribal, and class desires, not to mention his embarrassing but unavoidable links with the British, the non-Iraqi origin of his House, and the indiscipline and almost endemic indocility of Iraqis. His hands often tied, his army continually below strength, his administrative machine scarcely adequate, and holding the balance between–or alternatively opposed by–antithetical forces, he could only build slowly, painfully, and circumspectly. It could be said of him that

he was too subtle, too complex, too apt to rely on maneuver. But quite apart from the influences, in this connection, of his youthful Meccan years, the situation in which he found himself in Iraq fostered such traits. In fact, his success lay essentially in his correlation with the character of his circumstances. A more forthright monarch would have sooner or later come to grief.

The men that Faiṣal trusted most were the ex-Sharīfians Ja‘far al-‘Askarī, Rustum Ḥaidar, and Nūrī as-Sa‘īd. But Ja‘far was not very politically minded, and too forthright in his views and manners to succeed in a situation that was inherently complicated. Stout and unwieldy of body, he grew in time fatter and lazier, so much so that in 1927 one of the better informed English officials described him as “a mere jelly bag.”[43] Rustum Ḥaidar, a quiet, able, and perceptive individual, was hampered by the persistent inclination of Iraqis to regard him as something of a foreigner.[44] Nūrī, on the other hand, was a Baghdādī not only by birth or connections, but in his habits, gregariousness, and loyalty to his friends.[45] He was also vibrant with energy, a “boule de neige,” as an ex-premier put it,[46] and resourceful and exceptionally alert.[47] By the mid-twenties, he had become in effect Faiṣal’s right hand.

As the king leaned on Nūrī, Nūrī leaned on his close companions among the ex-Sharīfians. Thus, when he was appointed in 1922 as the first director general of police, he introduced many of them as commandants or officers.[48] “It was obvious,” remarked subsequently the British chief of the political section, “that he was making sure of the police.”[49] He did the same thing in the army over which he had, during most of the twenties, direct authority, either as deputy commander-in-chief or as minister of defence, or in both capacities. The post of deputy commander-in-chief of the army–of which the king himself was the titular head–was created in 1924 with a view to putting Nūrī in “permanent command” of the military forces and giving Faiṣal assurance that “the army would be in hands which he could trust whoever held the portfolio of Defence.”[50] The extent to which, under the aegis of the king and Nūrī, the ex-Sharīfians penetrated the military establishment may be gathered from the fact that out of the total of 19 senior army officers who had an active status in 1936, 12 were ex-

Sharīfians, including 3 out of the 3 major generals, 3 out of the 4 brigadiers, and 6 out of the 11 colonels.[51]

The hold that Nūrī gained upon the army, coupled with his continued enjoyment of the king's favor, perceptibly increased his political influence. Already in 1927 he was thought to be "hard to uproot."[52] Three years later, to Faiṣal's evident satisfaction, he became premier. Significantly, he assigned five out of the six seats in his Cabinet to ex-Sharīfians: he brought Jamīl al-Midfa'ī to Interior; Ja'far al-'Askarī to Defence; 'Alī Jawdat al-Ayyūbī to Finance; Jamīl ar-Rāwī to Communications; and Jamāl Bābān to Justice.[53] These were also, of course, the king's men.

It is not clear what share Nūrī's reputed unscrupulousness had had in his rise to power. Some of his rivals were literally terrified of him. In 1930, for example, the two Suwaidīs, Nājī and Tawfīq, feared for their very life. Commenting upon this, at a private gathering, the onetime minister of finance, Muḥsin ash-Shallāsh, maintained, according to the political police, that Nūrī "could easily arrange for the assassination of any of his opponents as he had done in the case of Tawfīq Bey al-Khālidī."[54] An ex-minister of the interior with anti-Sharīfian and pro-British tendencies, al-Khālidī had been killed in 1924 at Nūrī's instigation, as was commonly believed.[55] His suspected murderer, Shāker al-Qaraghūlī, an ex-captain and a henchman of Nūrī, sat in the Chamber of Deputies from 1943 to 1948.[56] Nūrī was apparently involved in another less publicized case: in 1930 a pensioned army officer, while under the influence of liquor, told 'Abd-ul-Ghaffūr al-Badrī, a leader of the National party and an inflexible critic of the 1930 Treaty, that Nūrī had promised to reinstate him in the army if 'Abd-ul-Ghaffūr was "removed."[57] But this may have been no more than an attempt by Nūrī to scare 'Abd-ul-Ghaffūr into silence.

Undoubtedly, Nūrī used his close and wide contacts with British officers and officials to strengthen his political position, but until 1930, when he assumed responsibility for the new treaty–a burden from which most of the senior politicians had shrunk–the British regarded him with a great deal of suspicion. He seemed, in their view, possessed of "a wonderful capacity for running with both hare and hounds." While on friendly terms with them, he egged on the patriot element, and was believed to be the power directing the pen of the uncompromisingly nationalist *Al-Istiqlāl*.[58] In other words, his tactic was in line with Faiṣal's own policy, although in 1923 the agents of

the British reported that he was doing his utmost “to get the King into his hands” and to make himself “the strongest man in the kingdom.”[59] The British distrust of Nūrī reached its height during the 1927 crisis in Anglo-Iraqi relations.[60] His influence–as well as that of Faiṣal and Yāsīn al-Hāshimī–appeared so prejudicial to British interests that the acting high commissioner[61] and his counsellor[62] went as far as to imply that there would be no “safety” unless all three were expelled from Iraq.[63] Moreover, while conceding that Nūrī was shrewd and, in war, a “good strategist,”[64] the British did not think, in the first decade of the monarchy, very highly of his political abilities. For example, when in 1929 the king sought to place him at the head of a coalition Cabinet of senior politicians, the high commissioner took objection. “It does not appear,” he observed, “that Nūrī as-Sa‘īd has either qualifications or weight of experience to hold such a Ministry together even for a short period.”[65] However, after 1930, the British changed their view of Nūrī and came eventually to look upon him as “an old and tried friend,”[66] although certain of their officials continued to think that he was “still by nature the restless imp of mischief” that they used to know in former days.[67]

After the rise of Nūrī to the premiership in March of 1930, and the relinquishing by the British of much of their hold over Iraq’s internal affairs, the government became until 1932 virtually a dictatorship of two, the king and Nūrī. In fact, Nūrī gained such an influence over the machine of the state that the king became somewhat uneasy. Under the cover of a campaign for the “purifying” of the public service, Nūrī got rid in 1930 and 1931 of many “incompetent” officials, filling the vacancies with his own supporters,[68] who were not necessarily the king’s friends, for whom, in consequence, too few places were left. Indeed, the new appointees were frequently men whom Faiṣal felt to be “without either ability or integrity,” their fidelity to Nūrī being their only claim to his patronage.[69] Anyhow, by November of 1932 Faiṣal had become anxious to commit the reins of government to “some more scrupulous individual than Nūrī.” The thought appears even to have briefly crossed his mind that he might have placed “too much power” in the hands of a “possible enemy.”[70] Nūrī himself attributed his dismissal to the king’s tendency–in the British ambassador’s own figure of speech–“to change the bowling whenever a member of his team has taken enough wickets to distract public attention from the captain

of the side."[71] Nūrī also thought that Faiṣal had become jealous of the international repute that his presentation of Iraq's case before the League of Nations at Geneva in 1932 had won him. But it is doubtful whether such a motive prompted the king, who was a big man and certainly bigger than Nūrī . On the other hand, it is clear that Faiṣal wanted the paramount direction of affairs in his own hands. Moreover, aside from his displeasure at the way Nūrī exercised his patronage, he apparently sensed a restlessness on the part of the political opposition, and desired to make a suitable adjustment on the ministerial level before its discontent would come to a head.[72]

At any rate, although, as was inevitable, the relations between the king and Nūrī in the last year of Faiṣal's life cooled noticeably, he continued to regard Nūrī as a friend. He and Nūrī, he explained in 1932, were "like husband and wife" and had their "occasional differences," and "should from time to time see less of one another."[73] But Nūrī was very indignant at the manner in which he had been treated. To a high official in the British Foreign Office, he confided in 1933 that he would not again undertake the responsibility of the premiership "so long as King Faiṣal occupied the throne."[74]

The succession to the throne in 1933 of Ghāzī, who had little understanding of the problems of his people and scarcely any aptitude for government, resulted in the sudden decline of the influence of the Palace. This, in turn, led to the entrance of the army into politics. So much has been made clear in other chapters. Here some attention must be devoted to the effects that these events had on the ex-Sharīfians and their fortunes.

Apart from their other aspects, which have already been dealt with, the 1936 and 1941 military coups could, in a sense, be viewed also as rebellions by the younger or second line of ex-Sharīfians, or by the post-1918 Sharīfian recruits against the dominant, minister-furnishing ex-Sharīfian element: Brigadier Bakr Ṣidqī and Brigadier ʻAbd-ul-Laṭīf Nūrī, who staged the 1936 coup, and all four of the young colonels who were behind the 1941 military movement–Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, Kāmil Shabīb, Fahmī Saʻīd, and Maḥmūd Salmān–were ex-Sharīfians of the post-1918 group.

Moreover, the differentiation into Iraqists and pan-Arabs that took place in this period within the officer corps as a whole also occurred in the ranks of the ex-Sharīfian segment of the corps.

Over and above this, the dominant ex-Sharīfians had each been developing his own body of clients, and tended in these years of political unbalance to act at cross-purposes, and only pulled together again at the height of the 1941 crisis, when they found that they had no support under them and had to flee the country.

For the most resourceful of the senior ex-Sharīfians, Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, things had begun to go badly even before Faiṣal’s death, as we have seen. Having little access to Ghāzī, his influence further decreased in the first half of the thirties. To this contributed also the rise in importance of Yāsīn al-Hāshimī.[75] However, Nūrī had still enough weight, especially in the army, for Yāsīn to admit to the British ambassador in December of 1935, during his tenure of the premiership, that “without Nūrī he clearly could not stand.”[76] Moreover, Nūrī counted upon the support of the British ambassador who, because Nūrī “always works amicably with His Majesty’s Embassy,”[77] impressed on Ghāzī the “importance” of giving him the portfolio of foreign affairs,[78] a post which he held almost continuously from 1933 till the 1936 Bakr Ṣidqī coup. However, the increasing links of Nūrī with the embassy, as they became widely known, pretty much destroyed whatever support he still had with the public at large. On the other hand, it would appear that Nūrī used his British connections for his own ends, sometimes leaving his colleagues in the Cabinet undisturbed in their impression that his ideas were inspired by the British government when, in fact, he was only giving voice to his personal wishes.

It is of symbolic significance that, after the success of the coup of 1936, Nūrī was the only Iraqi politician to seek refuge in the British embassy. He arrived there with a piece of luggage, and was in “a state of acute nervous excitement.” Bakr Ṣidqī, he said, intended to finish off Yāsīn al-Hāshimī and himself, as he had done with his brother-in-law Ja‘far al-‘Askarī. He also insisted that King Ghāzī had connived at Ṣidqī’s coup. Seeing that he was “on the verge of collapse,” the British ambassador sent him to bed, and the next day “got rid” of him by arranging for a British aircraft to fly him to Egypt.[79]

Nūrī did not return to Iraq until 25 October 1937. By that time Bakr Ṣidqī had been destroyed. At the head of the government stood Nūrī's fellow ex-Sharīfian Jamīl al-Midfa'ī who, however, did not share Nūrī's strong penchant for vengeful action against the partisans of the coup d'état. Unable to bend Midfa'ī to his will, and itching to retake office, Nūrī began working to turn him out. He had not been five days in Baghdād when he established contact with Colonel Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh through Colonel Fahmī Sa'īd, whose wife and Nūrī's wife were mutually related.[80] They held several meetings in Nūrī's house, and were later joined by the other chief associates of Ṣabbāgh. Eventually, Nūrī succeeded in persuading them to cooperate closely with him and the ex-Chief of Staff Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, and in impressing upon them, according to Ṣabbāgh, that the making of Cabinets should depend upon the consent of the army, which would thus "fill the vacuum" that Faiṣal's death had created.[81]

Sensing danger, Jamīl al-Midfa'ī went in December of 1937 to see the British ambassador, and asked him to use his influence to persuade Nūrī to accept the post of Iraqi Minister at London or some special appointment abroad that would provide a harmless outlet for his energy. The ambassador agreed that "in the general interests of peace and quiet in Iraq it was best that Nūrī should take a long holiday."[82] To the relief of Midfa'ī, Nūrī left the country not long afterwards.

However, before proceeding to London he met informally at Cairo in January of 1938 with Squadron Leader Hindle-James, who was perhaps connected with the British Secret Service. He was anxious, he told him, to know what course of action the British government would adopt "in the event of conditions in Iraq becoming definitely chaotic." If, he added, it had no intention of intervening, then he felt compelled to remain within easy reach of Baghdād so that upon the outbreak of the disorders which he expected, he could take the necessary measures "in consultation with King 'Abd-ul-'Azīz ibn Sa'ūud."[83] He also informed Hindle-James that Midfa'ī had expressed to him his intention to consider buying arms from Germany or some other country rather than depend in this matter solely on England.[84] Nūrī's statements, and particularly his last "somewhat sensational allegation" were viewed with "reserve." "... He may well hope," read a Foreign Office note, "to enhance his own merits in the eyes of His

Majesty's Government by painting other Iraqi politicians in the darkest possible colours."[85]

Eventually Nūrī got to London, but "entirely dominated," as the British ambassador would put it, "by a restless longing for a return to power and influence,"[86] he was back at Baghdād in October of 1938, and lost no time in renewing his links with Colonel Ṣabbāgh and his friends, and inciting them to overthrow Midfa'ī's government.[87] The officers' own dissatisfaction with–among other things–the premier's attempt to counterbalance them by another military group smoothed the ground before Nūrī. Reflective of his methods were the pains he next took to apprise the British that he had learned of a military plot and had "nipped it in the bud."[88] His obvious aim was to clear himself in their eyes from blame beforehand, and simultaneously prepare them for the actual coup that came off on 24 December 1938, and brought Nūrī to another term as premier.

Once in the saddle, Nūrī turned his attention to the Palace. He had never approved of Ghāzī. From the first he thought that he was unfitted for the Crown. As early as January 1933, eight months before Faiṣal's death, he unburdened himself to a member of the British Foreign Office. There would be, he said, "considerable support" in Iraq for a change of the law of succession in favor of Zaid, Faiṣal's half-brother.[89] Nūrī's opposition to Ghāzī sharpened in the next few years as he found himself unable to bring influence to bear upon the young king, either by persuasion or by pressure. Indicative of his feelings was his reaction to the 1936 escapade of Ghāzī's sister.[90] The Hashemite House, he argued, had been so dishonored that only the dethronement of Ghāzī could salvage its prestige.[91] Personal considerations undoubtedly played a role in Nūrī's increasing antipathy to the king. His only son, Ṣabāḥ, had been gravely injured in 1935 while performing stunts in an airplane for Ghāzī's amusement.[92] He may also have held against him Bakr Ṣidqī's murder of his brother-in-law. Ghāzī himself so detested Nūrī that on 24 December 1938, the day of the coup, he told Colonel Ṣabbāgh that he would be willing to entrust the government to any premier that the army might choose, but not to Nūrī.[93] Earlier, in November, he had kept Nūrī standing in audience and dismissed him after a few minutes.[94] It was about this time that Nūrī said to the counsellor of the British Embassy:[95] "We are not bound to the House of Faiṣal."[96] This was no thought actuated by impulse: in 1937 he had deputed a friend of the

Sa‘ūdī family[97] to meet King Ibn Sa‘ūd and raise the possibility of the candidacy of one of his sons for the throne of Iraq.[98]

With the reins now in his hands, Nūrī sought to shove Ghāzī into the background. His plan was to make Prince Zaid comptroller of the Royal Household and invest him with a large degree of authority, including the right to act as a channel of communications between Ghāzī and the government and Ghāzī and the British Embassy.[99] But the plan fell through or was not acted upon. Zaid may have refused to lend himself to Nūrī's purposes. Ghāzī, who was already "acutely jealous" of any attention shown to his uncle or to ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh, his cousin,[100] may have also put up such a resistance as could not be surmounted. At any rate, Nūrī was not able to work his will. More disturbing, from his point of view, was the growing influence over Ghāzī of Rashīd ‘Alī al-Gailānī, who toward the end of January 1939 had been made chief of the Royal Dīwān at Ghāzī's insistence, and proceeded to bring the king to the belief that he, Ghāzī, should henceforth be "the dominant factor."[101] At the same time, the king tried to revivify a link with the powerful Colonel Ṣabbāgh.[102]

To these happenings is tied the coming together of Nūrī and Prince ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh, which first came out into view in a strange affair that cannot go unmentioned. On March 1, Nūrī told the British ambassador that a military plot to depose Ghāzī and enthrone ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh had been unearthed. The plotters, he said, approached the prince, who, not concurring in their intention, immediately accused them.[103] On March 6, Nūrī made the alleged conspiracy public. The announcement carried the additional charge of a settled determination to murder not only Ghāzī but many other persons of prominence, including Nūrī. The accused, named by ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh, were military and civilian partisans of the Bakr Ṣidqī coup and Nūrī's own foes. What was left unexplained was why the latter, whom Ghāzī was known to favor, would wish to get rid of him. But the important point in this whole matter, which was widely believed to have been invented by Nūrī and the prince, is that it enabled Nūrī to purge the army of his opponents, and to pension off a large number of officers who had seniority over Colonel Ṣabbāgh and his associates.[104]

The atmosphere created by this episode should help to explain the suspicion of foul play aroused in the minds of Iraqis by the sudden announcement scarcely a month later–on April 4–of the death the night

before of Ghāzī from injuries sustained in a collision of the car personally driven by him with an electric light pole near a canal culvert close to his palace.

Was the death of Ghāzī an accident or an elimination of an inconvenient king? From the evidence available, it is difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion. A number of circumstances should, however, be brought out.

First, nine months before Ghāzī's death, on or about June 18, 1938, a personal attendant upon Ghāzī was found shot within the palace. According to an official account given the next day or so, and a July report by a British technical police expert, the cause of the death lay in the accidental discharge of the attendant's own revolver. But the incident threw the king into a panic. For several days afterwards he stood, it was said, in fear of "imminent assassination." He may have suspected that behind the incident was an adherent of his wife, Queen ʻĀliyah, from whom he was alienated, and who was a sister of ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh. The queen had a feeling of repugnance toward the attendant, whom she regarded as Ghāzī's "boon companion in debauchery." Significantly, about ten days after the incident, when as yet only conjecture was possible, the British ambassador had enough misgivings about the relations within the royal household to warn: "The risk, whatever it may be, that the King may fall a victim to some palace plot. . . must continue to be run."[105]

Second, as late as January 1939, the British did not favor the removal of Ghāzī from the throne. Apprised of Nūrī's plan to reduce the king's role[106] and "clean up" the Palace, their ambassador, while not suspecting Nūrī of "directly sinister designs" or desiring to impede his plan, had apprehensions that things might be carried to "extremes." "The point," he added, "at which we must at least try to apply the brakes is the dethronement of Ghāzī. I would not change him for ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh and I am not yet sure that I would change him for Zaid. Moreover, the dethronement of Ghāzī might split the country in a way which would be inconvenient and dangerous."[107] The Foreign Office approved of the ambassador's conclusions.[108] However, the British may have had a change of heart subsequently. They became clearly annoyed by the rise in the intensity of the nationalism advocated by Ghāzī's personal broadcasting station and, in particular, by its repeated appeals to the Kuwaitīs to ditch their shaikh and rejoin Iraq. "I remember," writes ex-Premier Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, "the meeting I had [two weeks before Ghāzī's

death] with R. Butler, the Permanent Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs. He told me that the King was playing with fire and feared that His Majesty might burn his fingers."[109] More importantly, a few days or so later Butler[110] discussed with Ambassador Maurice Peterson "the relative merits" of the various members of the royal house "in case any emergency might arise."[111]

But these circumstances, which are capable of bearing different interpretations, and the singular accompaniments to the event–the little damage, for example, done to the car in a crash supposedly violent, and the mysterious disappearance of the servant[112] and the wireless supervisor[113] who were said to have been sitting in the car's back seat[114]–do not add up to anything conclusive, but neither do they dissipate the doubts that still surround the incident.

Anyhow, from the standpoint of subsequent history, what actually happened is less important than what the people suspected to have happened. The lurking suspicion of having masterminded or played roles as accessories to outside influences in the king's death pursued Nūrī, ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh, and Queen ʻĀliyah to the end of their lives, and was one of the elements that damaged the moral authority of the Crown beyond repair.

Curiously enough, on the morning of 4 April, Queen ʻĀliyah swore, as Nūrī subsequently informed the counsellor of the British embassy, that she would produce a document in which the wish of Ghāzī was expressed that in the event of anything happening to him, his son being a minor, her brother should be regent.[115] But nothing further was heard of the document. All she brought forward was a written statement to that effect signed by her and Ghāzī's sister which, when it became public, met with general disbelief, it being widely known in Baghdād that Ghāzī hated ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh. Nevertheless, on the basis of this statement and the insistence of Ṣabbāgh's group,[116] which was still influenced by Nūrī, the regency of the prince was proclaimed.

At the king's funeral, which aroused intense feeling, groups of mourners were heard chanting: "Thou shalt answer for the blood of Ghāzī, O Nūrī!"[117]

The change in the Palace strengthened Nūrī in the year that immediately followed. The inexperienced twenty-seven-year-old regent was entirely guided by him.[118] Moreover, as he did during his first term as premier,[119] he filled many important places in the government with his own men,[120] but,

obviously, not without creating a host of malcontents. In this period, and particularly after the outbreak of the World War in September of 1939, the British also backed him to a greater degree than previously. However, they stopped short of unconditional support. This is clear from the attitude they adopted in February of 1940, when it looked very much as though Nūrī was trying to involve blameless opponents in the murder of his Minister of Finance Rustum Ḥaidar. “On the one hand,” read a contemporary Foreign Office note, “General Nūrī is all in all the most friendly of the politicians in Iraq and, other things being equal, we should like him to remain in power as long as possible, above all in the present circumstances. On the other hand, if we allow him to get rid of all his opponents by dubious means, we run the serious risk of being regarded as his partners in oppression or even in crime.”[121] But the real underpinning, at that time, of Nūrī’s position was provided by Ṣabbāgh’s army group, which continued to work closely with him and with his ally, the Minister of Defence Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, until the defeat of France in June of 1940, when the group developed the belief that Nūrī’s strongly pro-British orientation was no longer in the national interest. Nūrī apparently tried to change Ṣabbāgh’s mind. If he knew, he is said to have told him once, that the English would lose the war, he would be the first to draw his revolver and fire at them.[122] Nūrī had even sought to take the country formally into the war and, having hoped, it is evident, to bring Rashīd ‘Ālī round to his point of view, had three months earlier vacated the premiership in his favor, restricting himself to the portfolio of foreign affairs, but not before putting on the retired list the sympathizers that Rashīd ‘Ālī had in the army, and who desired for him a freer hand than Nūrī was willing to give him.[123]

As Colonel Ṣabbāgh and his associates now withdrew their support from Nūrī, he quickly lost his ability to affect events and, therefore, also his usefulness from the British standpoint. ‘For all his goodwill,” wrote C. J. Edmonds to the British ambassador in April of 1941, “Nūrī is liable to be in effect an anti-British irritant than a pro-British tonic.”[124]

The sequel has so well been dug into that it is pointless here to retrace it. It must be emphasized, however, that the flight of Nūrī and the regent at the climax of the 1941 crisis, and their return from abroad only after the country had been subdued by British power, made them so odious among the people that, regardless of what they did afterwards, they were never able

to command public confidence. Their image as servants of foreign interests and the impression that the British were in the background of their actions and policies simply would not wash.

The regime, that the "Second British Occupation" ushered in 1941, took more and more the characteristics of an unaccountable and coercive rule in which visible authority lay in an uneasy partnership of Nūrī and the regent, drawing its strength from its subservience to British power and to native vested interests.

The increasing coerciveness of the regime will become plain from the events described in Books Two and Three. Here it is sufficient to point out that whereas in the first two decades of the monarchy, that is, between 1921 and 1941, Baghdād was not placed under martial law for a single day, between 1941 and 1958 such law was invoked four times, and applied in the city for a total of 2,843 days,[125] that is, for almost eight out of the last seventeen years of the monarchic era.

The key to British policy in this period was essentially as it had been in the past, that is, in the words of A. Cadogan of the Foreign Office, "to achieve our ends by the use of influence rather than the direct exercise of authority."[126]

At first the British were reluctant to employ Nūrī as their instrument for this purpose. They viewed him as "a potential embarrassment' and "packed [him] off" as minister to Cairo,[127] the Foreign Office recommending that "a little" be added to his allowances in order "to keep him quiet."[128] Through the regent, they charged the ex-Sharīfian Jamīl al-Midfa'ī with the formation of the government. However, Midfa'ī proved unable to take care of the internal situation in a manner answering to their interests. As they could find no one else who had the necessary abilities and was at the same time well disposed to them, they summoned Nūrī back from Cairo in October of 1941 and, though they did not "like the idea,"[129] made him premier, a post that he held until June of 1944.

Having his heart "in the right place," Nūrī, it goes without saying, closely cooperated with them, placed "dangerous" nationalists in concentration camps, weeded out officials and military officers with anti-British leanings, exempted tribesmen from conscription, reduced the size of the army by making the third battalion of each brigade into a cadre only; but, side by

side with this, he protected his men, “however bad their record,” and concerned himself, as the British suspected, with safeguarding and strengthening his own position in the army and government.[130]

The British, though of the opinion that Nūrī was better and had “a far broader outlook” than most of the Iraqi politicians, never thought highly of the cabinets that he headed in the forties. “I attacked His Excellency,” wrote in November of 1943 Ambassador Kinahan Cornwallis to Anthony Eden,

> for the endless failure of his governments to tackle the economic problem [the spiraling inflation] honestly and boldly, for the manner in which they have tolerated dishonesty and inefficiency in the public services, for the resultant weakness and corruption in the police, the unreliability of the army, the mishandling of the Kurds, the shameless landgrabbing carried on by prominent personalities, the general lack of courageous leadership, and the wide gulf between the government and the people.[131]

But, of course, the estrangement of the bulk of Iraqis from the regime stemmed in part from its dependent character. On the other hand, abuse of influence was rife, and the members of the Cabinet and their supporters, “being drawn from the ranks of the propertied classes, are themselves among those who primarily stand to gain from inflation and are, therefore, lukewarm at best in combating it.”[132] Indeed, at one point, the British Intelligence Service, obviously mirroring the prevalent public feeling, characterized the government as “an oligarchy of racketeers.” But to this, Cornwallis took objection. “It is going altogether too far,” he said, “to describe them indiscriminately as crooks.”[133] He also insisted that Nūrī personally could scarcely be accused of seizing political opportunities to finance himself.[134]

However, the British had begun already to feel in a pressing manner the need for “grooming” a successor to Nūrī who would be more acceptable to Iraqis. “The weakness of our long-term position in Iraq,” telegraphed the Foreign Office in September of 1943, “undoubtedly consists in the extent to which our eggs are concentrated in Nūrī’s somewhat unstable basket.”[135] The British had had hopes at one time of Ṣāliḥ Jabr, a Shī‘ī lawyer and Nūrī’s minister of interior. However, for some unspecified reason, they

became disappointed in him, but that they did not count him out altogether is clear from his rise, with Nūrī's collaboration, to the premiership in 1947. The British had also considered, and now turned their attention again towards, Ibrahīm Kamāl, an ex-Sharīfian officer and a competent administrator, but an opponent of Nūrī from the mid-thirties, and one of the persons against whom had been brought in 1940 the accusation of involvement in Rustum Ḥaidar's murder.[136] But Ibrahīm Kamāl appeared unable to win a personal following or popular support.[137] For the time being, therefore, they had to content themselves with Nūrī, while insisting on the introduction of some "fresh blood" into his Cabinet. Initially, Nūrī protested that new men with experience in government were "extremely hard" to come upon, and showed reluctance to give up his old cronies in favor of "untried and possibly hostile critics." Later, however, he made an overture even in the direction of Kāmel Chādirchī of the *Ahālī* group, but without success.[138]

Eventually, in June of 1944, Nūrī's Cabinet, which he had reconstructed no fewer than nine times, fell, after the regent had allowed the word to be spread among its opponents that it did not enjoy his favor.[139]

The regent, who now took a more active part in the making and unmaking of cabinets, was a man of inferior clay. "I doubt," had written Ambassador M. Peterson three months or so before 'Abd-ul-Ilāh's assumption of the regency,

> whether he has any capacity at all, even could some more serious occupation than horse-racing or the illegal pursuit of gazelle in motor-cars be found for him. His personal morals are not above suspicion, more particularly as regards an exaggerated association with a jockey of the Dulaim, the "Gordon Richards" of the Baghdad race-course, while he keeps his attractive Egyptian wife. . . as closely immured as any favourite of the harem.[140]

'Abd-ul-Ilāh had never had much learning. As a pupil, he was a failure. He attended for a number of years Victoria College at Alexandria, but could not complete the required program of study.[141] Before that and until he attained–in 1926–the age of fourteen, he had been educated at home in Mecca and

moulded essentially by his mother, Queen Nafīsah, a Circassian, who had spent her youth in one of the palaces of Sultan ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd in an atmosphere permeated by "intrigues, anxiety, and fear."[142] To such influences as he came under in his childhood, his foes ascribed his proneness to suspicion, his rancor, and his apparent difficulty to get on with others or to form lasting friendships. Nor were these negative qualities compensated for by anything like Nūrī's shrewdness or Faiṣal's gift for sorting out and adjusting conflicting claims of politicians and parties.

Before 1943, ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh pretty much deferred to Nūrī in the affairs of government, though he frequently had in ministerial posts men who were loyal to him personally. For example, in the Cabinet that Nūrī formed on October 5, 1942, Taḥsīn ʻAlī, the minister of education, and Aḥmad Mukhtār Bābān, the minister for social affairs, were dependents of the regent; just as Taḥsīn al-ʻAskarī, the minister of interior and Nūrī's brother-in-law, and ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh Ḥāfiḍh, the minister for foreign affairs, were Nūrī's protégés; and Ṣaliḥ Jābr, the minister of finance, and Dāūd al-Ḥaidarī, the minister of justice, the favorites of the British embassy.

However; in the course of 1943, particularly after the prerogatives of the king, which the regent exercised, were enlarged to include the power to dismiss the prime minister,[143] ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh started to drift away from Nūrī and to act on his own, imagining for himself a role similar to that of Faiṣal I. Thus in May, Nūrī complained of his "troubles" with the regent, who would not appoint a "reliable" chief of the Royal Dīwān,[144] that is, one satisfactory to himself. At about the same time, ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh drew close to– and henceforth and until 1952 would rely for advice increasingly upon– Shāker al-Wādī, an ex-Sharīfian officer, who had participated in the Bakr Ṣidqī movement, and whom Nūrī hated.[145] Moreover, in October, Nūrī, who had long been in the habit of packing the Chamber of Deputies with his own friends, found himself confronted with a demand for the acceptance in its entirety of a list of parliamentary candidates prepared by ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh himself. Commented the British ambassador: "The Regent has been thinking it would be nice to be a dictator and choose all the deputies, but I don't think he has been very impressive. In fact, he nearly got himself into a bad mess."[146]

But, after June 1944, as the British themselves had grown tired of Nūrī's "perpetual new deals from a tattered old pack," ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh gained a freer

hand in the selection of ministers. In fact, the next four cabinets were largely his own handiwork. In his name was also launched the liberal experiment of 1946 which, however, produced effects so disturbing to the established classes that he abruptly reversed course and permitted a policy of unrestrained suppression, arousing such general hatred that Nūrī had to be called back to office. These things are set out in detail in Book Two. So are also the circumstances connected with the Portsmouth Treaty, and that sparked off the *Wathbah* of 1948, which further undermined the prestige of the regent, not only from the popular standpoint but in British eyes, by reason of his loss of nerves and repudiation of the treaty at the culminating point of the uprising.

Partly because of the foregoing considerations, and partly by dint of his keener discernment and better knowledge of his countrymen, Nūrī had a far greater impact than ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh on the broad lines of policy and the general character of the state in the last decade of the monarchy. Even when he did not hold the premiership, he influenced the government through his nominees in the Cabinet or through his majorities or pluralities in Parliament.[147] Naturally, ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh continued to feel uneasy at having a figure so powerful as Nūrī on the scene, and tried to cut him out from affairs on more than one occasion,[148] or to encourage or build up rival politicians such as Ṣāliḥ Jabr,[149] or, by using the sweets of office or resorting to electoral manipulation to draw away his supporters or reduce his parliamentary advantage.[150] Relations between Nūrī and the prince so deteriorated that in 1954 a strong conviction developed in the circles of the opposition at Baghdād that Nūrī was working to remove him from the succession to the throne.[151] Moreover, a few months before the downfall of the monarchy, Nūrī apparently urged upon Aḥmad Mukhtār Bābān, a confidant of ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh, that the presence of the prince in Iraq was "complicating" things, and that it would be best if he were persuaded to accept an ambassadorial post abroad and the wherewithal to live comfortably for the rest of his life.[152]

Undoubtedly, the discord between Nūrī and the crown prince weakened the monarchy, but its real trouble sprang from sources deeper than the frictions and intrigues of individuals at its summit. Apart from its too close and now irrevocable identification with a waning British imperial order, it suffered from the inherent inability of its ruling element to cope effectively

with serious social unbalances, to which pointed the recurrent urban uprisings[153] and the intermittent agrarian unrest,[154] and which had their roots in the rapid growth of the urban population,[155] the inflated cost of living,[156] the marked expansion in the size of the educated middle class[157] and its limited economic and political opportunities, the rise in the consciousness and desires of the peasantry and town workers, the beginnings of capitalist agriculture, the virtual exemption of the landed class from income taxes,[158] and the extreme concentration in the ownership of capital[159] and land.[160]

The inability of the ruling stratum to grapple with these basic structural problems stemmed from the necessity of its situation, that is, from its living links with the established social classes. An alteration in the pattern of taxes, a redistribution of the social income, and a curb, at the minimum, in the hold of the tribal shaikhs and aghas on the land were indicated–in fact, indispensable. But one of the constant features of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd’s political ascendancy in the period 1941-1958 was what British Ambassador Kinahan Cornwallis described in 1943 as Nūrī’s “perhaps natural reluctance to offend powerful agricultural and mercantile vested interests.”[161] How closely connected Nūrī was with these interests emerges clearly from the membership of the Higher Directorate of the “Constitutional Union Party,” which he formed in November of 1949 (consult Tables 10-1 and 10-2). The landed shaikhs and aghas and the wealthy merchants, who constituted its warp and woof, continued to provide the core of his political support, even after the dissolution of the party in August of 1954. Indeed, Nūrī could be said to have been in the last two decades of the monarchy the chief arbiter and executive organ of these classes, inasmuch as his internal policy in that period is intelligible only from the standpoint of their needs and interests.

True, after 1952, as pointed out elsewhere, the flow of oil money made the state, in an economic sense, increasingly autonomous from society; but Nūrī could not grasp the chance that this development afforded him to loosen his connections with the vested interests and reorient his social policies. For one thing, he had grown old and inflexible in his views and methods and may not have seen the new immanent possibilities. For another, he had gone so far in alienating the urban middle and working classes that it was too late to shift course.

Moreover, Nūrī, no less than the royal family and the other principal ex-Sharīfians, had by this time become, even economically, members of the

established order. It should be mentioned in this connection that Faiṣal I had not been, relatively speaking, a wealthy monarch. His civil list in the twenties was the equivalent of only 5,250 dīnārs.[162] He did acquire in 1922 a dairy farm covering 2,000 acres of state land,[163] but as late as 1927 the high commissioner could adduce as an element in the king's acceptance of British advice the fact that "he has no means of support if he abdicates."[164] By contrast, in 1958 Faiṣal II drew a salary of 48,000 dīnārs and 12,000 more as allowances[165] and, more than this, had 124,000 dollars stacked away in the First National City Trust Co. of New York alone.[166] In the same year, the royal family owned 177,000 dūnums of agricultural land[167] and had substantial investments in a textile mill and the Manṣūr Racing Co.[168] For his part, Nūrī possessed a stately house on the Tigris. The money for it came partly from his sale in 1952 to the Egyptian embassy for 32,000 dīnārs of his old house in the Wazīriyyah district,[169] which he had built in the thirties "presumably with his share of the £25,000 distributed by the original concessionaires of the B.O.D.,"[170] a British oil group. Moreover, Nūrī's son, Ṣabāḥ, who was "a scourge on the head of his father," had by 1958 acquired, apparently through abuse of influence,[171] title to 9,294 dūnums of valuable land.[172] As for Nūrī's ex-Sharīfian colleagues, they made out of political opportunities much more money than he did. His brother-in-law Ja'far al-'Askarī had, together with Jamīl al-Midfa'ī and 'Alī Jawdat al-Ayyūbī, laid hands on a large part of the state-owned shore of the Tigris in the Majīdiyyah district of Baghdād.[173] Ayyūbī was probably the wealthiest of the ex-Sharīfians. In addition to his Majīdiyyah holding, he owned about 90,000 square meters in the quarter of Umm-il-'Iḍhām in Baghdād's district of Karrādat Maryam,[174] and 6,366 dūnums of agricultural land,[175] not to mention his shares in the Iraq Cement Co.[176] Not far behind him was Midfa'ī, who, besides his 3,976 dūnum agricultural estate,[177] owned a cigarette-making factory with ex-Premier Tawfīq as-Suwaidī and others.[178]

In brief, the principal ex-Sharīfians had become very much part of the agricultural and moneyed vested interests, and less and less conscious and comprehending of the little people and of the problems and difficulties of their daily life.

But it does not follow that Nūrī or the other established politicians were utterly insensitive of the social unbalances or of the seething ferment in the

middle and lower levels of society. However, Nūrī's basic tendency was to let the thorny social question slide. The extreme concentration of property, he maintained as late as 1958, would be moderated by the natural workings of the Moslem law of inheritance. At the same time, he tried to buy off potentially threatening elements or to check the rising oppositional tide by political manipulation or by sheer force. He thus pampered the army officer corps.[179] He also introduced into his cabinets, as the British had advised him in the forties,[180] younger men from the middle classes. This is reflected in Table 7-3 in the significantly higher proportion of ministerial seats–34.7 percent–that went to "other strata," that is, to other than the established classes, in the last decade of the monarchy–a proportion that fell only slightly short of the 35.5 percent that was their share in the period of the military coups (1936-1941). However, as is clear from Tables 7-2 and 10-4, the ex-Sharīfians and the other established politicians did not relax to the same degree their hold on the premiership and the key portfolios of defence and interior.

TABLE 10-1

Members of the Higher Directorate of Nūrī as-Sa'īd's "Constitutional Union Party" in 1949

Name	Nation	Sect	Province of birth	Profession and class[a]
Nūrī as-Sa'īd	Turko-Arab	Sunnī	Baghdād	Premier and middle proprietor[b]
Khalīl Kannah	Arab	Sunnī	Baghdād	Lawyer-minister and middle proprietor; related by marriage to Nūrī
'Abd-ul-Wahhāb Mirjān	Arab	Shī'ī	Ḥillah	Minister; wealthy landowner and wheat-mill proprietor; see also Tables 5-3 and 9-13
'Abd-ul-Hādī ach-Chalabī	Arab	Shī'ī	Baghdād	Minister; wealthy landowner and merchant; see also Tables 5-3 and 9-13
Ṭāriq al-'Askarī	Arabized Kurd	Sunnī	Baghdād	Middle landowner; nephew of Nūrī
'Abdallah al-Yasīn	Arab	Shī'ī	Kūt	Wealthy landed shaikh of tribe of Mayyāḥ; see also Table 5-3
Muḥān al-Khairallah	Arab	Shī'ī	Muntafiq	Wealthy landed shaikh of tribe of Ḥmaidāt
Sha'lān Salmān adh-Ḍhāher	Arab	Shī'ī	Dīwāniyyah	Wealthy landed shaikh of tribe of Khazā'il; see also Table 5-3
'Abd-ul-Muḥsin aj-Jaryān	Arab	Shī'ī	Ḥillah	Wealthy landed shaikh of tribe of Albū Sulṭān; see also Table 5-3
'Ajjah ad-Dallī	Arab	Shī'ī	Dīwāniyyah	Landed shaikh of tribe of adh-Ḍhawālim
Ghānim ash-Shamrān	Arab	Shī'ī	Ḥillah	Landed shaikh of tribe of Fatlah
Muḥammad Ḥabīb al-Amīr	Arab	Shī'ī	Kūt	Wealthy landed amīr of tribe of Rabī'ah; father-in-law of Crown Prince from 1953; see also Table 4-2
Khamīs ad-Ḍārī	Arab	Sunnī	Dulaim	Landed shaikh of tribe of Zawba'
Khawwām al-'Abd 'Abbās	Arab	Shī'ī	Dīwāniyyah	Landed shaikh of tribe of Banī Zuraij; see also Table 5-3
Thāmir as-Sa'dūn	Arab	Sunnī	Muntafiq	Landed shaikh of the Sa'dūn Clan
'Abd-ur-Razzāq 'Alī as-Sulaimān	Arab	Sunnī	Dulaim	Landed shaikh of the Dulaim
Ṣiddīq Mīrān Qāder	Kurd	Sunnī	Arbīl	Landed agha of tribe of Mīr Maḥmalī, a section of Khoshnao; see also Table 5-3
'Alī Aḥmad Agha	Kurd	Sunnī	Arbīl	Landed tribal agha of Diza'ī
Ḥamīd aj-Jāf	Kurd	Sunnī	Sulaimāniyyah	Landed chief of the Jāf tribe
Majīd al-Khalīfah	Arab	Shī'ī	'Amārah	Landed shaikh of the tribe of Albū Muḥammad; see also Table 6-13
Amīn Rashīd Agha	Kurd	Sunnī	Kirkūk	Landed tribal agha
Ṣagbān al-'Alī	Arab	Shī'ī	Muntafiq	Landed shaikh of clan of Āl Abd-as-Sayyid[c]
'Abd-ul-Wahhāb aṭ-Ṭalabānī	Kurd	Sunnī	Kirkūk	Landed chief of Qādirī mystic order; see also Table 5-3
Salmān ash-Shaikh Dāūd	Arab	Sunnī	Baghdād	Lawyer from a propertied family of *'ulamā'*
Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Bahr-ul-'Ulūm	Arab	Shī'ī	Karbalā'	Lawyer from a propertied family of *'ulamā'*
Nihād az-Zahāwī	Arabized Kurd	Sunnī	Baghdād	Owner of land and buildings from a family of *'ulamā'*
'Iz-zud-Dīn Mulla	Kurd	Sunnī	Arbīl	Landowner from a family of *'ulamā'*
Muḥammad Yūnis	Arabized Turkoman	Shī'ī	Mosul	Landowner
Ḥasan an-Naqīb	Arab	Shī'ī	Karbalā'	Landed *sayyid*
'Abd-ul-Qāder Bāsha'yān	Arab	Sunnī	Baṣrah	Landowner, date merchant; claimant of descent from 'Abbāsids
'Abd-ul-'Azīz 'Araim	Arab	Sunnī	Dulaim	Landed merchant
Kāḍhim al-Ḥajj Rzukī	Arab	Shī'ī	Dīwāniyyah	Merchant

Aḥmad ʿAlī ash-Shabbūṭ	Arab	Shīʿī	Kūt	Landed merchant
ʿAlī Kamāl	Kurd	Sunnī	Sulaimāniyyah	Landed merchant; ex-director of Police, Baghdād
ʿAbd-ur-Razzāq Sharīf	Arab	Shīʿī	Ḥillah	Landed merchant; ex-mayor of Ḥillah
Mattī Sarsam	Arab	Christian	Mosul	Lawyer from a wealthy mercantile family
Farḥān al-ʿIrs	Arab	Shīʿī	ʿAmārah	Landed merchant
ʿAbbūd-ush-Shnain	Arab	Shīʿī	Dīwāniyyah	Landowner
ʿAbdallah ash-Sharfātī	Kurd	Sunnī	Mosul	Landed lawyer from the tribe of Sharfāt
Ahmad al-ʿĀmer	Arab	Shīʿī	Baṣrah	Landed lawyer
Muḥammad Ḥasan Kubbah	Arab	Shīʿī	Baghdād	Minister; lawyer from a mercantile *chalabī* family
Jamīl ʿAbd-ul-Wahhāb	Kurd	Sunnī	Baghdād	Minister; son of a lieutenant-colonel
Muḥammad ʿAlī Maḥmūd	Kurd	Sunnī	Arbīl	Minister; lawyer; middle proprietor
Saʿd ʿUmar	Arab	Shīʿī	Karbalāʾ	Minister; lawyer; middle proprietor
ʿAbd-ul-Majīd ʿAbbās	Arab	Shīʿī	Muntafiq	Minister; teacher
Jamīl al-Urfalī	Arabized Turk	Sunnī	Baghdād	Minister; lawyer; economist from an originally wealthy landed bureaucratic and mercantile *chalabī* family

[a]All 46 members of the higher directorate of the party served or would serve in the Chamber of Deputies.

[b]Nūrī's house and land in Baghdād were worth upwards of 50,000 dīnārs in 1958. His son, Ṣabah, also owned 9,294 dūnums of agricultural land.

[c]A section of Khafājah

Source: The names of the members of the higher directorate of the party were obtained from the Directorate of Security, Baghdād. Iraqi Police File entitled "Ḥizb-ul-Ittiḥād-id-Dustūrī" ("The Party of Constitutional Union") has reference. For help in identifying the membership I am indebted to National Democratic Leader Kāmel ach-Chādirchī and to ex-Premier Tawfīq as-Suwaidī.

TABLE 10-2

Summary of Table 10-1

Class	No. of members
Landed tribal shaikhs or aghas	17
Merchants, landed merchants, and professionals of mercantile background	8
Propertied minister-providing stratum	8
Landowners or propertied professionals of *'ulamā'* background	4
Landed chief of mystic order	1
Landed *sayyid*	1
Other landowners	5
Others of ministerial stratum	2
Total	46

Province of birth	*No. of members*
Baghdād	9
Dīwāniyyah	5
Muntafiq	4
Ḥillah	4
Arbīl	4
Kūt	3
Dulaim	3
Mosul	3
Karbalā'	3
'Amārah	2
Baṣrah	2
Sulaimāniyyah	2
Kirkūk	2
Total	46

Nation and sect	*No. of members*
Arab Shī'ī	23
Arab Sunnī	7
Kurd Sunnī	12
Turko-Arab Sunnī	1
Turkoman Shī'ī	1
Turk Sunnī	1
Arab Christian	1
Total	46

TABLE 10-3

Agricultural Lands Owned by the Premiers of the Monarchic Period

Name of premier	Area in dūnums[a] owned by premier in 1958	Area in dūnums[a] owned by premier's direct descendants in 1958	Province	Remarks
ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān al-Gaylānī		13,668	Kūt and Ḥillah	Disposed also of rich *waqf* lands
ʻAbd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn		–[b]		
Jaʻfar al-Askarī		7,685	Baghdād	
Yasīn al-Hāshimī		5,474	Kūt	
Tawfīq as-Suwaidī	8,704		Baghdād	
Nājī as-Suwaidī		1,110	Baghdād	
Nūrī as-Saʻīd		9,294[c]	Baghdād	
Nājī Shawkat		–		
Rashīd ʻAlī al-Gaylānī	2,453		Baghdād	Most of his land had been confiscated in 1941
Jamīl al-Midfaʻī	3,976		Diyālah	
ʻAlī Jawdat al-Ayyūbī	6,366		Diyālah	
Ḥikmat Sulaimān	16,676		Diyālah	
Ṭaha al-Hāshimī				
Ḥamdī al-Pāchachī		34,337	Baghdād	
Arshad al-ʻUmarī				
Ṣāliḥ Jabr				Related by marriage to landed aj-Jaryāns; see Table 5-3
Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr				
Muzaḥim al-Pāchachī	1,941		Baghdād	
Muṣṭafa al-ʻUmarī	12,732		Mosul	
Nūr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd				
Fāḍil aj-Jamālī				
ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb Mirjān	9,170		Ḥillah	
Aḥmad Mukhtār Babān		3,958[d]	Kirkūk	

[a]One dūnum = 0.618 acres.

[b]Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Saʻdūn's brother, ʻAbd-ul-Karīm, owned 28,623 dūnums in the province of Baṣrah.

[c]These dūnums belonged to Ṣabāḥ, son of Nūrī as-Saʻīd.

[d]These dūnums belonged to Sarāb, daughter of Babān.

TABLE 10-4

Appointments to Posts of Minister of Defence and Minister of Interior under the Monarchy: Share of the Various Governing Classes and Strata

Years	Total no. of appointments	Share of sadah		Share of ex-Sharīfian officers[a]		Share of other (senior) army officers[a]		Share of old "aristocracy" of officials		Share of wealthy mercantile families		Share of senior civil servants[a]	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1921-1932 (Period of "Mandate")	28	8	28.5	11	39.3	1	3.6	4	14.3	3	10.7	1	3.6
1932-1936	16	1	6.3	9	56.2			6	37.5				
1936-1941 (Period of military coups)	18	8[b]	44.4	4	22.3			6	33.3				
1941-1946 (Period of "Second British Occupation")	18			9	50.0	2	11.1	4	22.2	1	5.6	2	11.1
1947-1958	40			17	42.5	7	17.5	6	15.0	2	5.0	8	20.0
Total	120	17	14.1	50	41.7	10	8.3	26	21.7	6	5.0	11	9.2

[a]The senior civil servants, the senior army officers, and the ex-Sharīfian officers included in these columns were by origin from the middle or lower middle or humbler classes.

[b]Includes the six appointments of a *sayyid* who was at the same time a senior army officer.

But there were too few ministerial posts, and numberless opponents. Moreover, not all army officers were opportunists. These methods were also at best palliatives. Nor did Nūrī's recurrent rule by fiat and with an iron fist help. The essence of the social ailment remained untouched.

So far in this work attention has been pretty much concentrated on the state of affairs at the upper social and political levels. It is time now to shift perspective and examine what was happening underneath the structure of power and in the lower reaches of society.

BOOK TWO

THE COMMUNISTS FROM THE BEGINNINGS OF THEIR MOVEMENT TO THE FIFTIES

PART I

BEGINNINGS IN THE ARAB EAST

11

THE EARLIEST “LEVELERS”; THE ARMENIAN HENTCHAK; THE JEWISH COMMUNISTS; AND THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Ideas of a leveling nature existed in the Arab and Ottoman East prior to the outbreak of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.

There is record of a reckless dreamer of Greek provenance setting out on February 18, 1894, to win unaided the workers of Cairo to “socialism and anarchy.” “Remember,” he said in an appeal to the “oppressed workers,” “that this is the anniversary of the rise of the Commune in Paris. Let us, therefore, on this occasion join ranks and together raise our voices and declare: ‘Death to the rapacious exploiters! Long live the Socialist Revolution! Long live Anarchy!’”[1]

It was, in terms of the conditions of 1894, a marginal and incongruous incident with no preliminaries in Arab life and no sequel. Its significance lay in that it pointed to where future Bolshevism would first find a congenial home in Egypt: the semi-Arabized European colonies.

In the remote and neglected provincial capital of the Ottoman Empire that was Baghdād at the end of the nineteenth century, it is hard to conceive even of the possibility of such an incident. Baghdād, unlike Cairo, had no semi-Arabized European settlements, where latest ideas of any kind were always likely to find adherents. Besides, its industries were of the handicraft variety. It had, therefore, scarcely any proletarians, in the strict socialist sense, to whom a socialist appeal could have been addressed. Even a quarter of a century later, when an Iraqi newspaper–*Al-Mufīd*[2]–announced that a Labour party was about to take the field, the announcement was generally regarded as a witticism.[3]

One of the first notes in the modern literature of the Arab East on behalf of the yet silent, sunken masses of society was sounded by ‘Abd-ur-

Raḥmān al-Kawākibī (1848-1902), a native of Aleppo, Syria, a *sayyid*,[4] and an eminent Moslem revivalist, and, to the people of his home town, Abū-ḍ-Ḍu‘afā‘–the Father of the Weak.[5]

“Human beings share the hardships of life in an unjust way,” wrote al-Kawākibī around 1900,

> for men of politics and religion and their hangers-on–and their number does not exceed one percent–enjoy half or more of what congeals from the blood of humanity, and squander it in self-indulgent luxury . . . .[6] And those who trade in precious and luxurious commodities and the avaricious merchants and the monopolists and the like of this class, and they number also around one percent, live each of them as live tens, or hundreds, or thousands of workers and peasants .... It is not a question of equating. . . the active and enterprising with the indolent and the sluggard, but justice requires other than that inequality, and humaneness imposes that the elevated should take the lowly by his hand and bring him close to his rank and mode of life.[7]

Whence this inequality that al-Kawākibī so abhorred, this “social tyranny that is guarded by the citadels of political tyranny?”[8] “It is the natural order among animals . . . that the members of the same species do not eat one another but man devours man,”[9] literally and figuratively. It is this “injustice that dwelleth in the instinct of man”[10] that is the root of the whole problem. From it arises political tyranny which in turn leads to extreme economic inequality.[11] This apparently is the sequence of history. On the other hand, the building of great individual fortunes “strengthens internal tyranny by dividing the people into slaves and masters and external tyranny by facilitating aggression on the freedom and independence of weaker nations.”[12] For this reason[13] and in order to “preserve equality among men in regard to money power,” “heavenly laws and political and ethical wisdom banned usury.”[14] The accumulation of capital is, consequently, not permissible except under three conditions.[15] First, it must be lawful, that is, things should only be acquired by exchange, or against surety, or in return for labor performed, or if they are from the bounty of nature. Second, accumulation should not involve any encroachment on the needs of others, as by the “monopoly of necessities or the oppression of weak laborers or the

seizure of what is public as, for example, the appropriation of the land, which God has created for the enjoyment of all his creatures. . . .”[16] Finally, accumulation should not be much in excess of needs, because immoderate wealth does not only foster tyranny but is also morally perverting.

Obviously, al-Kawākibī’s appeal–if only for a modest share for the many in the wasted abundance of the few–rested on rational and, primarily, ethical principles rather than on a “scientific” or historical necessity. Besides, the strongly ethical direction of his thought blended with a marked preference for gradualism. He thus frowned on the use of force, and held that change could best be effected through a growth in the consciousness of the community that education alone could induce.[17] All this attests to the non-Marxian origin of his leveling ideas.[18]

Of more significance in the long run are al-Kawākibī’s egalitarian graftings upon the Moslem economic tradition–graftings that are reminiscent of the not very happy attempts of certain parsons of the nineteenth century to give Christianity a Communist tinge. In his *Ṭabāi‘al-lstibdād*, al-Kawākibī went even to the length of asserting that the seventh-century Islamic government of the Orthodox caliphs, “the like of which history has never reproduced among men,” had created among Moslems “the conditions of a Communist[19] existence that can hardly be found even among brothers . . . Nursed by the same mother.”[20] In his view, “the equality or nearness in rights and living conditions . . . , that the Communists, the Nihilists, the Socialists . . . are striving for,” were realized by early Islam, which brought into the world “a life of common partnership.”[21] Most of the land in the first two centuries of Islam was, we are told, owned by “the generality of the nation,” and its fruits were enjoyed by those laboring on it, subject only to the payment of the *‘ushr* and the *kharāj*.[22] This reveals how superficial was al-Kawākibī’s knowledge of the early Islamic society. And when he proceeds to regard the ineffectual *zakāt*– a 2.5 percent poor tax–as a leveling force and to seize upon it as an evidence of the “equality” and “common partnership” of early Moslems, he leaves us also in doubt as to whether he had much understanding of what “the Communists, the Nihilists, and the Socialists” stood for.

But from our point of view, what matters is not whether al-Kawākibī understood early Islam and “Communist” doctrines or otherwise, or whether the Moslem tradition lends itself to an egalitarian interpretation or

not; the relevant point is that it has been so interpreted, and that Islam was associated with "communism," even if the association was more verbal than conceptual. In subsequent decades this association was to incline minds favorably toward communism and to facilitate its progress. The popular Iraqi poet Ma'rūf ar-Raṣāfī was in effect but echoing al-Kawākibī when on 7 June 1937, he rose in the Iraqi House of Deputies and declared: "I am a Communist. . . but my communism is Islamic for it is written in the Sacred Book: 'And in their wealth there is a right for the beggar and the deprived.' . . . And it was the Prophet that said: 'Take it from their wealthy and return it to their poor.' Was this not communism? Who would then but out of ignorance resist this principle?"[23]

The depth of Ma'rūf ar-Raṣāfī's knowledge of Islam or of communism is, of course, beside the point.

Within less than a decade from the appearance in Cairo of al-Kawākibī's *Ṭabāi' al-Istibdād*– in the months of unhindered freedom that followed the 1908 Young Turk Revolution–unfamiliar feelings and inclinations came to the surface in Lebanon. In part, they took the expression of a vehement attack on the authority of the priests by a number of Christian men of letters.[24] The framework of Lebanese life was broadly religious. The churches, in consequence, were firmly entrenched in the society, and the priests, who in the Mount Lebanon had managed in the course of the nineteenth century to attract to themselves much of the power of the old "feudal" leaders, controlled land and buildings in almost every town and in many villages throughout the country. They also ruled like autocrats over the intellectual and material life of their parishioners. The latter were at that time compared to the peasantry of Spain in their subjection to the priests.[25]

But the rebellious men of letters did not merely seek to emancipate themselves from the clerics. Some of them also believed that religion sowed hatred and dissension among the people.[26] Others thought that all religions shared the same verities and that all the people should, therefore, join in a common brotherhood.[27] Characteristic of the new spirit was this advice by a Christian poet[28] to his brother Moslem:

Leave my priest and your *shaikh*[29] in their disputations,
And come and speak to me of essential matters.[30]

These sentiments were accompanied by inclinations of a more radical coloring. We know of their presence only indirectly from the reaction of the over-sensitive priesthood. In the contemporary writings of Louis Sheikho (1859-1928), an influential spokesman of the clerical class, there are references to “certain poets” and “some seditious and riotous persons” who “exceeded all bounds” and demanded the abolition not only of authority but also of differences between men. “They have no use,” he tells us, “for the *sayyid* or the *amīr,*[31] the learned, or the wealthy.” “They allege that all people have the same right in property, wealth, noble rank, and authority.” “How can the *imām,*[32] the priest, and the bishop be put on the same level as the vulgar and market people?” he wondered. This went against “all the natural and moral laws.” The differences between men were the work of God and man had no right to complain of his lot, for God’s answer to him would be: “Nay but, 0 man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?” (Romans 9:20-21)[33]

It is not clear who were the “seditious and riotous persons” to whom Sheikho referred. In the works of Amīn ar-Rīḥanī (1876-1940), the first but perhaps not the most representative of the literary rebels of the time, there is nothing that savors even by implication of radical egalitarianism. Even though ar-Rīḥānī said very cutting things about the clerics[34] and the men of capital,[35] he explicitly rejected the principle of equality, and believed simply in the proposition: to each according to his deserts.[36] Of course, Sheikho could not have had in mind the physician Shiblī Shumayyil (1860-1917), who had migrated to Egypt long before and preached there a vague and innocuous species of “socialism.”[37]

Anyhow, what matters is that the literary rebellion of 1908 has a place in the history of Arab communism. For one thing, it left its impress upon Yūsuf Ibrahīm Yazbek,[38] a founding member in 1925 of the first Central Committee of the Communist party in Syria and Lebanon. For another, the sentiments to which it gave expression were in a sense the progenitors of that movement, which in the wake of the collapse of the Central Committee in 1926, grew gradually around the Lebanese paper *Ash-Shams* (“The Sun”) and inspired the formation in Baṣrah in 1929 of Jam‘iyyat al-Aḥrār-The Association of Liberals-better known by the name given it by its adversaries

as Al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al-Lādīnī– “The Anti-Religious Liberal Party”[39]–the first Communist front organization in Iraq.

But neither the undeveloped inclinations for equality in the Lebanon of the years prior to the Bolshevik Revolution nor the more systematic contemporary literary endeavors of Salāmah Mūsa, a Copt of Egypt, the author of the first Arabic booklet on socialism,[40] and a gradualist and a Fabian through and through, compare in significance, from the point of view of our history, with a movement of young Armenian revolutionaries that was active at that time in the underground in various Ottoman cities and particularly in Constantinople, and that carried the name of Hentchak-The Bell.

The Hentchak[41] owed its origin to the initiative of a few Armenian students who began publishing a paper by that name in Geneva in 1887. Its long-range aim was the unification of all Armenians in one socialist state. In the nineteen-hundreds it identified itself as a “social democratic” organization and cooperated closely with the Bolsheviks in the Caucasus against the more nationalistically inclined Dashnagtzoutian-The Armenian Revolutionary Federation. Students were preponderant in the organization, and in 1910 formed their own auxiliary “Student Union of the Social Democratic Hentchakian,” and in the following year started publishing the *Gaidz* (“The Spark”).[42] In 1914, having allegedly heard of a plan by the Turkish government to transfer all Armenians from Eastern Anatolia to some other region of the Ottoman Empire, the Hentchak organized a terrorist group and, according to one of its leaders,[43] joined al-I’tilāf, an opposition party, in plotting, with the knowledge of the French government, a coup d’état, and for its part undertook to murder Turkey’s three strong men, Jamāl, Ṭal‘at, and Enver.[44] However, in the same year, after holding a secret congress that was attended by fifty-six delegates from the various Ottoman provinces, the society was discovered by the Turkish police. A *provocateur*, Arshavir Yassian, had passed word of the plot to the authorities. As a result, twenty of the members suffered death by hanging. However, one of the leaders, Arsen Kidour, a 26-year-old teacher of history at the Ṣultāniyyah School in Baghdād and the son of a well-to-do grocer from Turkish Bayazit, saved his neck by escaping prison with the help of Rashīd ‘Ālī al-Gailānī, a teacher-colleague, and of Iraqi supporters of al-

I'tilāf; and was fated, as we shall see, to influence in the nineteen twenties the development of communism in Iraq.[45]

But it is not only on account of Arsen Kidour that the Hentchak belongs in this history. The Hentchak was in a sense the forerunner of the Communist party of Syria and Lebanon: the first Communist cells to be formed in Beirut issued from this society. In 1925 Haroutioun Madoyan–better known as Artin Madoyan–a 20-year-old medical student at the Jesuit University and the son of a refugee shoemaker from Adana, Turkey, split from the Hentchak and with Haykazun Boyadjian, a student of dentistry from Zaḥleh, Lebanon, organized the Spartacus[46] Group, one of the nuclei of the Provisional Central Committee of the Communist party, which came into being in Beirut later that year.[47] Madoyan is still a leading member of the party in the Lebanon; Boyadjian lives now in Soviet Armenia. Boyadjian, incidentally, initiated into the Communist party in 1930 an 18-year-old Damascene student by the name of Khālid Bakdāsh.

Socialist and Communist Jews, in particular Russian Jews, had also a hand in the rise of communism in the Arab East. Sometimes Arab anti-Communists try to make much of this fact, but it must be remembered that these early Jewish Communists were men wholeheartedly dedicated to their cause, and that their ethnic origin or past religious affiliation were for them matters of little moment.

It was a Russian Jew, Joseph Rosenthal, a trade jeweller at Alexandria, who set communism on foot in Egypt. "The Communist movement . . . in Egypt," wrote in 1921 the British chief of the political police at Cairo, "is a one-man show . . . and the one man is Rosenthal."[48] He had arrived at Alexandria in 1898 or thereabouts,[49] and had been known to the authorities since 1901 as a holder of "very advanced ideas on social questions," and had been variously described as an "anarchist," "agitator," and a "politically dangerous" person.[50] When he began his work in 1919 on behalf of the Communist International, he was not inclined to form a definite Communist party but to introduce his converts into existing communities with a view to reorienting them toward Bolshevism. He was also careful to remain within the law.[51] However, in 1920 he organized strikes by the employees of tailors and barbers, and a protest by shopkeepers against the high cost of shop rents. In the same year he formed at Alexandria the Communist Club and

the “Groupe d’Études Sociales,” and in 1921 the “Groupe Clarté” and the Egyptian Socialist party.

The Communist Club consisted mainly of workers whose field of activity was the “Conféderation Général du Travail,”[52] of which Rosenthal was also the secretary.[53] Preparatory work in the area of labor agitation had been done by the Italian Giuseppe Pizzuto, a comrade of Rosenthal: he had set up various workers’ syndicates and a “Bourse du Travail,” and had initiated the practice of admitting Egyptians into unions on an equal footing with Europeans. But Pizzuto had been arrested and deported from Egypt in 1919.[54]

To the “Groupe d’Études Sociales” belonged a number of intellectuals and traders, for the most part of Greek origin.[55] The society held public conferences and spread “the most daring ideas” on moral and social conventions in its monthly organ, *Ta Grammata*.[56]

The “Groupe Clarté” was similar to the organizations that existed throughout France and took their name from the French Communist weekly *Clarté*. It naturally corresponded with the center of the Clarté movement in Paris, which was guided by Anatole France, Romain Rolland, Henri Barbusse, and others. It counted about twenty-five members, including two Arab Egyptians, three or four Russian Jews, and one Italian, but the majority were Greeks and at the same time members of the “Groupe d’Études Sociales.” The declaration of adherence, which all had to sign, read as follows: “Being aware of the lying and injustice that reign in the capitalist régime, by which a small minority exploits and commands the great majority who compose the working masses, I adhere to the Clarté Club and promise to aid with all my power the intellectual revolutionary movement, which opens and prepares the way towards the true social revolution.”[57]

The Egyptian Socialist party embraced mainly Arab Egyptians.[58] The only noteworthy things that it accomplished were, first, the translation into Arabic of some of Lenin’s essays[59] and, second, the subscription of the funds needed to send to Russia one of its original members, Maḥmūd Ḥusrī al-‘Arābī, who in 1921–1922, received a course of training in the principles and methods of the Communist International.[60] The party may have also ordered a few Egyptians to Palestine to help the Communists there who sought to spread their doctrines among Arabs, but were experiencing a

difficulty in respect to language, inasmuch as most spoke only Russian or "pigeon English."[61]

Rosenthal appears to have kept in touch with the Communist International by means of Edward Zaidman, a Bolshevik courier, and Litvinov, who was said to be at the time the Bolshevik representative at Reval, Estonia.[62] Instructions and letters arrived occasionally in parcels of books, being hidden by the method of binding them up in the book covers. Funds were brought at one point by Scandinavian sailors on their way to the Far East.[63] But not all the amounts needed for effective work were forthcoming. Thus, in April of 1921, as is clear from a report by Comrade Eliava, a member of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist party, which British Intelligence acquired from the Office of the Soviet Delegation in Berlin with the aid of "*a* tried and trusted agent," both the Executive Committee of the Communist International (E.C.C.I.) and the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs refused to grant funds, requested by or through a Comrade Teravanesov, for the strengthening of Bolshevik propaganda work in Egypt, in view of the "greatness of the sums" involved.[64]

The efforts of Rosenthal and his companions among Egyptians were unwittingly assisted by the British General Staff Intelligence Department. Through the instrumentality of the friends at al-Azhar University of one of its officers–a certain Beaman–the department succeeded in August of 1919 in obtaining from the grand muftī, Shaikh Muḥammad Bakhīt, a *fatwa–a* formal religious opinion–against Bolshevism.[65] The effect was directly contrary to what it had anticipated. Some newspapers, like the *Ahālī*, a mouthpiece of the Fabian Salāmah Mūsa, and the nationalist *Wādī-in-Nīl*, attacked the *fatwa* and defended the Bolsheviks.[66] The independent *Al-Ahrām* published an interview of Lenin with a German journalist, giving his definitions of communism, which on comparison with the *fatwa* were taken by the reading public to be a refutation of the muftī.[67] For their part, the Communists did not mince their words: "They have deceived you, O Bakhīt! You have deviated from right in order to render a service to the English!"[68] Said in old Cairo the reformist and widely respected Shaikh Rashīd Riḍā: "Nobody in Egypt ever knew so much . . . and the newspapers never wrote so much about Bolshevism before the publication of [the

fatwa]."[69] Indeed, for a time, Bolshevism became the general topic in Egyptian circles. "Everybody," affirmed a contemporary political report,

> seems to take particular interest in the news that appears in the papers from time to time relative to Bolshevik activities. News of success or victory by the Bolsheviks [in Russia and Central Asia] seems to produce a pang of joy and content among all classes of Egyptians. They have condemned the *fatwa* that the Grand Muftī issued against Bolshevism and consider the adherents to this cause to be fighting for the freedom of mankind.[70]

What accounts in part for this unexpected reaction was the fact that the well-known leader Enver Pasha and a strong force of Turks, whom the Egyptians regarded as "true and honest Moslems," had cast in their lot with the Bolsheviks. It is necessary also to call to mind that 1919 was the year of the explosion of the long-simmering popular feeling against Egypt's occupiers.

Two other factors furthered the progress of Joseph Rosenthal's Bolshevik work. One was the suffering of a great many Egyptians from the economic dislocations of the First World War. A symptom of this was the current coffee-house talk of Bolshevism. "Its general tendency," read a police account, "is that the Bolsheviks are coming to take Egypt and it will be a fine thing for Egypt when they do. Then if a poor man wants money, he will just take it from the rich."[71]

The other factor was the helping hand that the new Russia appears to have held out to Egypt's nationalists. According to the records of the British Intelligence, Dr. Ḥāfiḍh ʻAfīfī– a member of the now historic delegation or Wafd that went to Europe in 1919 to plead Egypt's cause, and that was led by Saʻd Zaghlūl–gave at a meeting held at his clinic in Cairo on October 8 details of the dealings that the delegation had with the Bolsheviks at Paris. "We have taken," Dr. ʻAfīfī said,

> no engagement to introduce integral Bolshevism into Egypt. The Russian and Hungarian Bolshevists did not even ask us to do so. The Russian Bolshevists promised the Saʻd delegation simply to help it to

> drive the English out of Egypt, because every weakening of the English in any part of the globe is an advantage for Sovietism and a defeat for Capital. Consequently, they help us without asking anything from us except our assurance that a free and independent Egypt shall have a very radical and very wide labour policy. We naturally promised this, sure as we are that these objects can be easily obtained by a propaganda in favour of pure Islamic ideas, which are the truest and most radical principles of Socialism. Consequently, the Bolshevists are doubly helping us. Firstly, by the money they have given to Sa‘d (a voice asked: ‘How much?’ and ‘AfīTī answered: ‘A great deal’) and by the propaganda which they are making directly and without our interference in Egypt. It is thus that the syndicalist movement, which did not exist when we left Egypt, has been successfully organized without our help and during our absence. We have nearly promised to produce the same movement among the peasants, and a committee of the delegation in Cairo has a very wide-spreading programme for this object.[72]

The Bolsheviks, it seems, also assisted the Egyptians in the matter of arms. A coordinating committee, formed in Rome for this purpose, consisted of Vorovskii, the accredited Soviet representative in Italy; Vehib Pasha, a Turk and an agent of Enver Pasha; ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd Sa‘īd, an Egyptian nationalist; Ekrem Bey Libohova, an Albanian and a relative by marriage of the ex-khedive of Egypt; and Khālid Gargarini, a Tripolitan and a member of the League of the Oppressed Nations of the Orient. Up to the end of February 1922, Vorovskii was said to have handed over to ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd Sa‘īd more than a million lire for the purchase of arms and ammunition and their transport from Italy to Egypt by way of Tripoli or Algeria.[73]

All this must have smoothed the ground for new, gradual, and deeper gains by the infant Egyptian communism, but not for the impatient, unrealistic, and openly defiant phase that began with the return from Moscow toward the end of 1922 of Maḥmūd Ḥusnī al-‘Arābī, the first Egyptian Comintern trainee. Up to this point the movement had been basically of a preparatory nature, and largely confined to the propagation of

ideas. ‘Arābī now constituted from the existing groups the “Communist Party of Egypt”; got rid of Joseph Rosenthal; drew up a program calling, among other things, for the abolition of private ownership in land and the setting up of rural Soviets; and, with the help of Shaikh Ṣafwān Abū-1-Fatḥ, an Azhar student, Antūn Marūn, a lawyer, Sha‘bān Ḥāfiḍh, a printer in *An-Niḍhām* newspaper, and a number of Greek and Russian revolutionary enthusiasts, opened branches at Zagazīg, Manṣūrah, Ṭanṭah, Gīzah, and other provincial centers, and mounted an agitation among the hands in the textile and oil industries. He also formed a plan to blow up the train of the British high commissioner, which, however, came to nothing.[74]

In the meantime, the political situation had been changing. A declaration put out by the British government in 1922 had conceded to Egypt a degree of internal independence and led, after the adoption of a constitution and the triumph of the Wafd in national elections, to the rise in 1924 of Sa‘d Zaghlūl to the office of premier.

Wishing, perhaps, to test the attitude of the new government toward labor, or interpreting the behavior of the Wafd as a concession to the English, and acting apparently in pursuance of a standing thesis of the Eastern Section of the Executive Committee of the Communist International enjoining the party to “support the national bourgeoisie in all cases where it actively wages war for national liberation” but to “decisively and resolutely attack any half-heartedness or wavering on [its] part,”[75] Maḥmūd Ḥusnī al-‘Arābī threw out on 22 February 1924 a challenge to Sa‘d Zaghlūl: upon his instructions, workmen at Alexandria, demanding the recognition of their syndicates and an eight-hour workday law,[76] struck and seized the Egyptian Oil (Egolin) and the textile (Filatures Nationales) factories. “The strike,” wrote a senior British official,

> was of peculiar interest, because for the first time in Egyptian history the strikers adopted true Communist methods, that is to say, they occupied the factories after ejecting the owners and managers and stated that they were going to carry on the work in their own interests, as they, being the people who laboured, ought to share amongst themselves the profits.[77]

The strike "much perturbed" Sa'd Zaghlūl, who sent a battalion of infantry in haste to Alexandria, but it was only after "a great deal of negotiation" that the strike ended. However, Maḥmūd Ḥusnī al-'Arābī and his companions were arrested and imprisoned. Deprived of its leaders, the movement collapsed.

But the party had all along been having difficulty standing on its feet financially. "Comrades," al-'Arābī had appealed to the Executive Committee of the Communist International in March of 1923,

> You have promised us since last summer your moral and material aid.
>
> In view of that promise, the party has exceeded its resources and is now suffering from a lack of funds which will be fatal. . . .
>
> Chances such as one rarely meet have occurred but have not been taken advantage of and one can truly apply to us the Arabic proverb "My thirst is great, I see water, but I have no means of reaching it." . . .
>
> The party is in debt both to private persons and to societies. . . . In addition, it has ceased to pay the rent of the place which was its working center and has received a notice to pay and quit. . . .
>
> Comrades, leaders, and guardians of the World Revolution, you know the role that Egypt will play in that revolution. . . . Help the party, send it funds and capable comrades. . . .[78]

After the disintegration of the movement in 1924, there were several attempts to resuscitate it. One was by Constantine Weiss (alias Avigdor), a delegate of the Eastern Section of the Comintern, who arrived at Alexandria from Russia early in 1925. He formed new cells, placed Rafīq Jabbūr, a Syrian editor in the *Niḍhām* newspaper, in charge at Cairo, and made the Greek sponge merchant Yanakakis the chief of the Alexandria branch. The new party established *Al-'Alam-ul-Aḥmar* ("The Red Flag") as its organ and, discontinuing the earlier practice of printing its publications in the public presses, made use of a private lithograph machine. It also decided to send four Egyptians, including two girls, and two Sudanese for training at Moscow. In June, however, the party was uncovered and smashed, and Avigdor deported.[79]

Another attempt at reorganizing Egyptian communism was made by Elie Teper, a Russian Jew and the vice-chairman of the Communist party of

Palestine. During the month of August of 1928 he contrived entry into Egypt accompanied by Yūsuf Ibrahīm, a graduate of KUTV–the Communist University of the Toilers of the East. Before they could accomplish anything, they were arrested by the police and placed on 12 December 1928 on the Soviet steamer "Ilyitch" for Russia.[80]

The Comintern now sent one of its more capable workers, Alexis N. Vasilev, a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. He came to Egypt as head of the Textile-Import Ltd., which had been organized in 1927 for the ostensible purpose of purchasing Egyptian cotton.[81] He was, however, betrayed by a diary and letters which fell into the hands of the British political police, and which had foolishly been kept by Rudolf Pinnis, a brother of the then Soviet commercial agent in Isṭanbūl, who had been secretly introduced into Egypt under the name of Hugo Rudolf.[82] On 27 April 1929, Vasilev was placed, like Teper before him, on a Soviet ship for Russia.

Communism had failed to strike root in native soil, and the Soviets, turning more and more inward, eventually lost interest. Thus in Egypt until World War II, Communist ideas would scarcely be kept glowing in a few and scattered cells.

Jewish Communists were also instrumental in the organization of Lebanese communism. The first of the Communists of the Lebanon, Fū'ād ash-Shamālī, a Maronite tobacco worker and the son of a poor peasant from the village of as-Suhailah,[83] was won to communism by Joseph Rosenthal.[84] In Alexandria, where he lived, he led in 1922 the Lebanese Workers' party, which was associated with Rosenthal's organization.[85] Subsequently, he was arrested, imprisoned, and expelled from Egypt. On the day of his arrival by ship in Beirut, he made the acquaintance of a young Maronite, Yūsuf Yazbek, a clerk in the immigration department of the port. Yazbek had read in the papers about the activities of ash-Shamālī, and already held vague and uncrystallized socialist views. They met many times after that, and began to work in an informal and irregular manner, Yazbek among the intelligentsia and ash-Shamālī among the tobacco workers in the village of Bikfayyah. In late 1924, upon the instructions of the Palestine Communist party, Joseph Berger, a Polish Jew, arrived in Beirut, met Yazbek, ash-Shamālī, and their friends and suggested that they formalize their

relationships and organize themselves. Some months later, in 1925, another member of the Palestine party, Elie Teper, whom we have already met, brought together the Armenian Spartacus Group of Madoyan and Boyadjian and the ash-Shamālī-Yazbek group. This led in the same year to the formation of the first Provisional Central Committee of the Communist party of Syria and Lebanon. Its members were ash-Shamālī, Yazbek, Madoyan, Boyadjian, and Farīd Ṭu‘mah, a Maronite tobacco worker from Bikfayyah.[86]

This last step was apparently taken without the knowledge of the Palestine party. “When the news of the formation of a Central Committee in Beirut reached Palestine,” Haim Auerbach, the chairman of the Palestine party, told a session of the Secretariat for Oriental Affairs of the Executive Committee of the Communist International held in Moscow in December 1926, “the Palestine Party decided that the step taken was detrimental to the organizers but that the mistake should not be the cause for the Mensheviks, who opposed the dissemination of Communist doctrines in the colonies in general and in Syria[87] in particular, to influence us against the recognition of the Syrian Party.”[88]

Haim Auerbach and his colleagues had planned on a Lebanese branch for the Palestine party and not on an independent Lebanese Central Committee, but the Lebanese Communists thought differently.

The only activity worth recording that the Beirut Provisional Central Committee initiated was the agitation carried on in 1925 by its front arm, the Lebanese People’s party, among the tobacco workers in Bikfayyah, ash-Shayyāḥ, Biskanta, Zaḥleh, and other places.[89]

But the People’s party and its Communist guiding nucleus abruptly ceased to exist following an incursion made by the police in 1926.

The Communist party of Palestine, though constituting communism’s most active outpost in the Arab East, wielded in effect relatively little influence in its home base, and was seldom taken into account by the Comintern, despite the international recognition extended to it on March 8, 1924. In carrying his thoughts back to the early years of the party, Haim Auerbach, its leader and real builder and, as he told Arab Communists,[90] a friend of Lenin from the days when the founder of the Bolshevik state was

in exile in Geneva, described the role and conditions of his organization in the following terms at a secret gathering held on March 8, 1927:

> We were the only Communist front in the Arab Orient and in the absence of anybody else we had to pay attention to every question. All the duties in relation to the revolution fell on our shoulders. We had to look into matters relating to Syria, Egypt, and Islamic congresses in Cairo, Mecca, and elsewhere. Our comrades realized the great scope of work but the International thought that our demands were immoderate. . . . We were not glad of our relations with the International; no replies were regularly made to our letters, no decisions were regularly passed in regard to the matters affecting us . . . and we used to receive very small assistance. . . . The International never used to think of us save when we sent a special messenger, and if it did think it was only temporarily. We were not considered in reality a factor of the International. . . . The result was that we were a small party that was burdened with great duties but was deprived of all means necessary for their performance.[91]

The then exclusively Jewish composition of the membership also hindered the party's progress. "I should not forget to mention," added Auerbach at the same meeting,

> the main evil with which our Party was afflicted, namely, that we were composed of a few Jewish persons. It is true that the Party progressed a good deal afterwards and comprised Arab members but it has been a very slow progress. Neither the Third International nor we ourselves are pleased with the results. Everytime we think of executing something, we behold the great necessity of the presence amongst us of a great number of Arabs. This is the Third International's opinion of our real position.[92]

The opinion of the International had been conveyed to Auerbach at the time of his participation in Moscow in what was in effect, as noted elsewhere,[93] the first serious debate of issues relating to the Arab East. In

the course of the debate, which took place in December 1926, the members of the Secretariat on Oriental Affairs of the E.C.C.I, carefully looked into the conditions of the Palestine party and came to the conclusion that its primary task lay in "Arabizing" itself, although they turned down with disdain a suggestion to lessen Communist activity amongst the Jews. Arabs were to be attracted by the issuance of pamphlets and of a "special" newspaper which the French Communists undertook to print in France. A decision simultaneously taken with a view to attaching a permanent representative of the Palestine party to the Executive Committee of the International "remained on paper."

At the same session, the Oriental Secretariat took up the question of the prospects of communism in Syria and Lebanon. It noted regretfully "the silencing of the voice" of the Beirut Provisional Committee, and ruled that the party in Palestine should be responsible for the "control and organization" of Syrian Communists; and approved, on the recommendation of Auerbach, the creation of a "Communist centre for the unity of parties in Arab countries." At the same time it deemed it necessary to "censure" the Palestinian Communists for their "ambitious demand to monopolize work in contiguous countries," and showed interest in relieving them as soon as possible of "this malady."[94]

It was with this end in view that, on the instructions of the Oriental Secretariat, Pierre Sémard, I. Hochmann, and Elie Teper arrived in Aleppo, Syria, in July 1927.[95] Sémard was in 1925 the chairman of the Politburo of the French Communist party, but at this time only a member of the French Confederation Général du Travail. Hochmann was a delegate of the Profintern.[96] Teper (alias Max Kogal) was, as already noted, the vice-Chairman of the Palestine party.[97] Their meeting place was the office of a certain Fatḥī Effendi, the editor of *Aṣ-Ṣabaḥ* newspaper. The object of their mission was unwittingly explained by Sémard to an agent of British Intelligence who appears to have been highly placed in the Communist movement. "We wish," Sémard told the agent,

> to establish a centre exclusively for Arabs, for the Palestine Communist Party is still too Jewish in composition and we find that Arabs do not like to be associated with Jews. In northern Syria, however, the population is almost exclusively Arab and Moslem *[sic]*

> and a properly established centre here would undoubtedly attract the masses. Furthermore, Aleppo is near the Turkish frontier, which would not only facilitate the visits of emissaries to Syria and make communications in general much easier than at present but would also give our comrades a better chance of escaping when danger threatens them in Syria.[98]

Subsequently, at a secret conference of the Palestine party held in Jerusalem on September 10, 1927, Elie Teper gave a long explanation of the policy of the Secretariat on Oriental Affairs. He said that the Communist leadership contemplated creating, in addition to the Aleppo center, a number of subcenters in other Syrian cities. The headquarters for Syria was to be shifted to Ḥomṣ if necessary. Aleppo was to be under the direction of a Jaffa executive, but subcenters in Syria and Palestine were to report regularly to Aleppo and Jaffa respectively, in order to avoid overlapping and congestion of work. A general meeting of delegates was to be held at each of these main centers once a month, in order to discuss the ways and means of developing their activity. The main centers and subcenters were to be free to draw up their own bylaws within the radius of the general laws of the Third International. Teper also indicated that facilities had been given for sending promising Arab students from Palestine and Syria to the Communist schools that had been opened at Toulon and Cherbourg for the training of young Communists. As to the tasks of the new Communist centers and of the Palestine party, Teper revealed that the Comintern's Oriental Secretariat had laid special emphasis upon the need for encouraging all movements, even those of "feudal" *amīrs* and tribal shaikhs, that tended to weaken British and French colonialism. The return of the Ḥijāz railway to Moslem ownership was also to be advocated with persistence. In this connection Teper stated that a mission of specially chosen propagandists would be sent from Soviet Russia to the Ḥijāz during the pilgrimage season for revolutionary work among the pilgrims. Under the head of labor activities, the instructions of the Oriental Secretariat related to the necessity of arousing the class consciousness of the peasants and workers and organizing associations in the towns and villages to resist

the application of such measures as the increase of working hours or the reduction of wages.[99]

The Aleppo center early received a set-back, the French police having arrested one Dorinovich, a liaison between the center and the Jaffa executive. Dorinovich was replaced by a certain Nessim Romanov who, however, came quickly under surveillance. Harassed by the police, the center was unable to achieve much progress.[100]

It was not until after the release from prison in 1928 of the first Communist of Lebanon, FБ'ād ash-Shamālī, that the movement revived. Ash-Shamālī now assumed the title of Secretary of the Communist party of Syria and Lebanon, and was to lead the party until 1936, when Khālid Bakdāsh, whom he himself had initially trained, returned from a two years' course of study at KUTV, Moscow, ousted him from the Secretariat, and took the helm. Under his guidance the movement was to become a factor in the life of the Arab East.

PART II

BEGINNINGS IN IRAQ

12

ḤUSAIN AR-RAḤḤĀL, AṢ-ṢAḤĪFAH GROUP, AND AT-TAḌĀMUN CLUB

In 1924 a little event lightly ruffled the routine of Baghdādī life and quickly passed out of memory. Its meaning was perhaps lost on all but the attentive observer, who could not have failed to recognize in it a premonitory symptom that the "have-nots" of Iraq were beginning to stir.

The event concerned a small underground association of obscure men, al-Ḥizb as-Sirrī al-'Irāqī– the Iraqi Secret party. Purely nationalist in its passions since its appearance in 1922, the party suddenly turned its ire against the opulent class. In the course of July of 1924, armed members of the party made their way into the offices of some of the leading men of business and demanded on pain of death payments of thousands of rupees because, as was stated in letters from their "Supreme Committee" which they presented, "we have up to the present not seen any actions useful to the country done by the wealthy, although they are enjoying the benefits of this miserable homeland more than others. . . . He who has given a warning is exonerated."[1]

Holdups were, of course, not something new in old Baghdad. What was new was the rationalization now given. But the only tangible result of the association's effort was the temporary flight of the wealthier Iraqi magnates to Lebanon.[2]

In the meantime, and independently of such crude and untutored expressions of class antagonism, the first seeds of communism in Iraq were being planted clandestinely and in silence.

We have had occasion to refer to Arsen Kidour, a member of the Hentchak,[3] and to mention that he taught history at the government Sulṭāniyyah school in Baghdād in 1914. In one of his classes in that year sat a

boy, eleven years of age, whose life was destined, if our interpretation of certain subsequent events is correct, to cross again with that of his teacher in circumstances of greater moment. The boy grew, according to Iraqis who are in a position to know, into one of the more brilliant intellectuals of contemporary Iraq. I have heard him called "the Iraqi Qāsim Amīn," although he never had the perseverence of the Egyptian feminist. One thing, however, is not open to dispute: he was the first of the Marxists of Iraq. His name was Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl.

Ar-Raḥḥāl[4] descended from an Arab father and a Turkoman mother. His mother belonged to the Naphṭajī family, which enjoyed for many generations a monopoly over the naphta springs of Kirkūk.[5] His father's family hailed from ar-Raḥḥāliyyah in the province of Dulaim and, in the nineteenth century, belonged to the class of the *chalabīs* who, as noted on other pages,[6] were merchants of high social standing. In that century the Raḥḥāls owned a large fleet of sailing ships and traded on the Iraqi rivers and in the Gulf and with India. Subsequently, however, they lost their wealth, partly because many of their ships, which then traveled in fleets, perished in a storm at sea, and partly because of the advent of British steamers on Iraqi waters. Ar-Raḥḥāl's father entered the Turkish officer corps and progressed to senior commands in the Turkish artillery. His military duties took him to many places in Iraq and the Ottoman Empire. His son always accompanied him and had a chance to observe at close range how his people lived, and when the closing years of World War I took him to Europe–his father went on a military mission to Germany–he could not help making comparisons between their condition and that of the advanced Europeans. The end of the war found young ar-Raḥḥāl studying in a German high school in Berlin. He was still in the German capital–in fact, in a confectioner's shop–when the Communist Spartakusbund threw its barricades up in the streets of the city (January 1919). He recalls turning to someone at the time and asking what it was all about. He was told that the workers wanted to set up a government of their own and he marveled at so "strange" a thing. As the sons of some of the participants in the uprising were his schoolmates, there was much discussion of the event in the following weeks, and this probably accounted for the increasing interest he now took in what the socialist paper *Die Freiheit* ("Freedom") had to say. Soon, however, he was back in his native Baghdād, only to find his

countrymen in the throes of restlessness and anxiety. This was 1920, the Year of Calamity–*ʻĀm an-Nakbah–when* Syria fell to the French and the Arab patrimony was everywhere being torn asunder. In a few months the Iraqi cauldron was boiling over. The conflicts that then raged, the tumultuous overflow of feelings, the fearful tensions, the repressions by the invader, the episodes of devotion and sacrifice–left their indelible mark on the sensibilities of many an Iraqi. Elation at the early victories of the revolt quickly gave way to depression and bitterness. A fancied freedom–the form without the substance–was not what the *shabībah*– the youth educated in the modern schools–had been led to expect.

It was in the years that now followed that political extremism progressively gained force in Iraq and moderation became anathema. The intellectual malaise that first manifested itself in the early years of the century, and that had its roots in the exhaustion of Islam, also deepened. The tendency of the educated youth to question the things that their elders idealized or took for granted became more pronounced, and their respect for traditions waned. When the Iraqi poet Jamīl Ṣidqī az-Zahāwī, now an old man but still young in spirit, exclaimed in 1924:

I am bored with everything old I have known in my life.
If you have something new, let us have it,

or when in 1928 he exhorted Iraqis:

Rise in violent anger against old usages
Rise even against Providence,[7]

he was expressing more than the oddities of a temperamental poet. His mood was the mood of many of the *shabībah*. Young ar-Raḥḥāl was part of this atmosphere. He contributed to it–surely more than many others–but he also breathed from it and it had inevitably its effect on the direction of his thought.[8]

One other factor that appears to have influenced the ideological development of ar-Raḥḥāl was his trip to India in 1921. This seemingly was an unplanned thing. Ar-Raḥḥāl had persuaded his parents to send him back to Europe with a view to resuming his studies. The Syrian route was

then unsafe. He therefore left Iraq by way of Baṣrah. His ship called first at Karachi and there, for some reason, ar-Raḥḥāl left it and was to stay in India for upwards of a year. What he did in that country besides learning English is not clear. In a conversation with this writer he stated that he was detained there by "considerations of a personal nature." In *Jalāl Khālid*,[9] a novel written by Maḥmūd Aḥmad as-Sayyid, and which in part is based upon the experience of ar-Raḥḥāl, there are repeated references to the hero's communion in India with a "revolutionary" Indian journalist.[10] At any rate, shortly after his return to Baghdād, ar-Raḥḥāl took to reading *The Labour Monthly*, which at that time was published by Palme Dutt, a young intellectual of Indian birth and a member of the Communist party of Great Britain. According to ar-Raḥḥāl's own account, he first chanced upon the periodical in Mackenzie's bookshop–a well-known British firm in Baghdād–and purchased his copies from there until the authorities deemed fit to ban it from Iraq. He was attracted to it, he said, because "unlike other periodicals, it hit hard at imperialism, which fitted with the mood of the day."[11]

Whether ar-Raḥḥāl's path crossed again with that of his former teacher, Arsen Kidour, before or after his trip to India cannot now be ascertained. Kidour, as a member of the Hentchak, was a non-Bolshevik Marxist. However, after the rise of Soviet Armenia, he appears to have drawn close to Bolshevism, if he had not in fact been Bolshevized, at least for a time. He had been exposed to Bolshevik influence even earlier and at several points in his life. From his school years at Echmiadzin in Russian Armenia–1903–1908–Khachik Samuelian, a Bolshevik and a professor of political economy, had left an impress upon his thought. In 1905 he took part at the school, which was run by the Armenian clergy, in "*a* sort of anticlerical revolt" led, among others, by a student-Bolshevik, Askanaz Mravian, who later became Soviet Armenia's minister of education. In 1917, after emerging from his hideout in Najaf–he had been implicated, it will be remembered, in the plot against Jamāl, Ṭal'at, and Enver–he came into touch, by virtue of his appointment as a Russian interpreter in the British army, with the Bolshevized Russian troops that occupied Khāniqin and Ba'qūbah[12] and, subsequently, left Iraq with them to Armenia.[13] In 1920 he returned as consul in Baghdād for the independent Armenian republic,

which had been proclaimed in 1918, but continued to act in that capacity for the Soviet republic that succeeded it in December 1920, while simultaneously running a wine shop in the Christian quarter of Ra's al-Qaryah. In June 1924 he closeted himself in a room at the Majestic Hotel with Gregory Mikhailovich Laktinov, "a member of the Moscow Extraordinary Commission,"[14] who had arrived in Baghdād on the third of that month en route for Bushire.[15] Later, in 1926, Kidour was visited by another Bolshevik, Shaul Sultanov, who was arrested shortly after in Mosul for his presence in Iraq "without being able to give a satisfactory account of himself," and for entering the country without a passport. Among the papers found in Sultanov's possession was an unsigned, undated, and unplaced note that enquired, among other things, about the agreement between Britain and Turkey concerning Mosul, the benefit accruing to Iraq from it, the strength of the Iraqi labor force in the oilfields, Iraq's share of the oil revenue, and the number and particulars of British troops in the Mosul district.[16] In the same year Kidour organized an Iraqi branch of HOK–Haistani Ognoothian Kommittee or Helping Armenians Committee, which, according to British Intelligence, originally worked for Armenian independence but subsequently became a Bolshevik society.[17]

It is not possible to say whether it was on his own initiative or under the influence of Arsen Kidour, or perhaps of the anonymous revolutionary from India, that Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl, now a student at Baghdād's School of Law, formed in 1924 what in effect was the first "Marxist" study circle in Iraq or, more precisely, injected Marxist elements into the thinking of an informal literary group that existed prior to that date. Most of the young men who closeted themselves with ar-Raḥḥāl in those days in retired debates in an inner room of Baghdād's Ḥaidarkhānah Mosque–a mosque famed in Iraq's history as the meeting place of the revolutionaries of 1920–would probably not have identified themselves as "Marxists," and if asked would have said that theirs was a circle for the study of "new ideas." Ar-Raḥḥāl referred to them simply as "jamā'tī"–"my circle." But a cursory glance at their mouthpiece *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah* ("The Journal"), which appeared in 1924–1925 and again briefly in 1927, is enough to reveal their pronouncedly Marxist orientation.

Among the principal members of the circle were Muḥammad Salīm Fattāḥ, a law student, the son of an ex-official of the Ottoman government, and the brother-in-law of ar-Raḥḥāl; Muṣṭafa ʻAlī, a school teacher, the son of a carpenter, and later–in the time of General ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim–the minister of justice; ʻAbdallah Jadūʻ, a clerk at the Directorate of Posts and Telegraphs and the son of a cloth contractor; ʻAwnī Bakr Ṣidqī, a teacher-journalist, the son of a petty official, and in the late fifties editor of the Communist-inclined *Ṣawt al-Aḥrār*; and Maḥmūd Aḥmad as-Sayyid, who was by far the most remarkable of the group.

As-Sayyid (1903–1937) is now remembered as the first of Iraq's novelists, but what is little known is that the "new ideas" of his friend ar-Raḥḥāl helped in awakening his latent literary gifts. These, let it be said at once, were by no means very impressive. It is doubtful whether his novel *Jalāl Khālid* or most of his short stories could be considered as works of art. Nonetheless he succeeded in vividly–and to an extent unconsciously–projecting the intellectual uneasiness and bewilderment of his generation and in adding something to the Iraqis' knowledge of themselves.

Although as-Sayyid and ar-Raḥḥāl came to share similar sympathies, they were strikingly different by background and temperament. As-Sayyid was born of an Arab father and an Indian-Afghānī mother into a family of *ʻulamāʼ* and *sayyids*. His father was for several decades the *imām* of the Ḥaidarkhānah Mosque. As could be expected, religion strongly colored his early upbringing. He, however, came under feeble secular influences when he attended Baghdād's Turkish elementary school. This was as far as his formal education went. But he read avidly on his own, devouring in particular the Egyptian books and journals that began pouring into Iraq after the First World War. A trip he made to India in 1919 opened before him new and enriching vistas, but his mental horizon remained more limited than that of his companion ar-Raḥḥāl, and his knowledge not as wide, although his was the greater sensitivity, the livelier imagination, and the more alert social conscience. Ar-Raḥḥāl's approach to life was also rather calmer and more deliberate, that of as-Sayyid more fervent and impetuous. The latter could not as ably as ar-Raḥḥāl handle theoretical or abstract ideas, or as readily discern their logical implications. He was also more easily overcome by the aesthetic quality of words than by their thought-content. His attachment to "communism"–if we can thus label the vague,

unfinished, and undisciplined ideas he held–was more a passion than a conviction. He sympathized with “communism” because he felt for the great mass of untended Iraqis and saw in “communism” a dissipation of the blackness in which they lived. If as-Sayyid should at all be defined, then he could be set down as a “sentimental” or “romantic Communist.” Ar-Raḥḥāl’s attraction to communism or, more properly, Marxism, was, on the other hand, of the intellectual variety: he was fascinated in the first instance by its dynamic thought processes.

The new “Marxist” circle first gave sign of crystallizing when it published on the 28 December 1924 *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah*. This was a paper of a new type, the first of its kind in the Iraq of the twenties. Unlike the other Iraqi papers, it sought not a livelihood but the conversion of men. Its preoccupation was not with news or belles-lettres, but with ideas. It focused on social problems and dealt only marginally with political issues. In a period when the free expression of opinions was fraught with risks, it did not hesitate to attack deeply ingrained beliefs and prejudices of the people. These things gave *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah* a character all its own, and marked the opening of new perspectives in the mental life of Iraq.

Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah tells us a number of things about the new circle. In the first place, it is clear from its pages that the circle never abandoned the level of ideas. In other words, it simply disseminated ideas and did not concern itself with political action. Furthermore, its ideas were set at a level high enough to escape the grasp of the mass of Iraqis. And then, although the predilection of its members for “Marxism” was unmistakable, the word itself did not occur even once in their writings. They did, however, declare openly that “historical materialism” was “the best interpretation” of the process of history.[18] This eluded the alert but sufficiently uninformed police. Their own knowledge of Marxism, it must be added, was not very profound. They were obviously only beginners. Their conceptions were derived for the most part from the *Labour Monthly* and from such articles as ar-Raḥḥāl translated for them from *L’Humanité*, the organ of the French Communist party.

One other thing *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah* plainly reveals: its writers had no definite program. All that they wrote, however, can be resolved into one dominant idea: the need to overthrow the power of tradition. They were all in one way or another rebels against tradition. At first they did not assail tradition in all

of its realms. They concentrated upon its influence in the life of the family and championed the liberation of the Iraqi woman from her ancient fetters. But in assailing tradition in this one realm they soon found themselves up against a force that permeated all the different realms and cemented the whole ponderous structure of tradition. This was, of course, the religion of Islam. They were not overawed. They questioned Islam's very foundations by explaining all religions in natural terms. This was more than traditional opinion could take, and *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah* was shut down.

In their call for the emancipation of the Iraqi woman, ar-Raḥḥāl and his friends were not pioneers. The call was first sounded by the poet Jamīl Ṣidqī az-Zahāwī. But it was only with them that feminism began taking the form of a campaign. It was rationalized and presented as a demand of the historical process. In the timing of the campaign, the influence of contemporary feminist advances in Egypt and Turkey is certain. But what is interesting is the rationalization that was employed insofar as it represents the first instance of the use of Marxist thought in Iraq, though not the first pro-Bolshevik reference for in this also az-Zahāwī preceded ar-Raḥḥāl. In January 1921 in a poem entitled "Life and Death" he had greeted the Bolshevik Revolution in these words:

> O ye poor do not despair
> of a life O ye poor!
> Lately over the mount of guidance
> has been hoisted for Bolshevism[19] a red banner.[20]

But then az-Zahāwī was fond of saying startling things, and was not always taken seriously.

The new circle's feminist argument developed in this way. It was opened by ar-Raḥḥāl in an article entitled "Determinism in Society."[21] There was no such thing as a "natural" or "immutable" social order, he declared. On the contrary, all social institutions were transitory in nature, since they were "the product of a changing economic environment." The position of women was subject to this "general law." The Arab family, in its existing form, ar-Raḥḥāl added, was a leftover from "feudal" times. The harem and the veil bore, accordingly, the imprint of "feudal" ethics. The aristocracy had been "able to build harems and keep so many women in them only by exploiting

the labor of the people." In the life of "the people's class"–among the laboring peasants–the harem and the veil were unknown and "will disappear altogether," he concluded, "when the people's class will establish its own supremacy." What he sought to put across was that in appealing for the abolition of the veil and the equalization of women with men,[22] he was only helping along a determination of history.

It was thus unheralded, unnoticed, and in feminist clothing that "Marxism" first entered into the mental world of Iraqis.

The traditionalists who took *Al-Badāi* '("The Marvels") for their mouthpiece were initially disposed to laugh off the new "feminist" appeal as the work of "Baghdādī babes" who unabashedly intruded their unsought opinions upon their elders and betters. Soon, however, some of the traditionalists condescended to argue with them. They could not understand, they said, why the "feminists" were actively advocating the liberation of women if change, as they claimed, was "determined." They were obviously guilty of a contradiction. The "feminists" countered that their opponents were unable to distinguish between determinism and fatalism and added that

> according to modern psychology which has its roots in the philosophy of the nineteenth century–of which economic determinism is an offspring–man may "will" certain things but the form of this will is determined by environmental influences. Once, however, man is thus influenced, new ideas form in his mind which he proceeds to utilize purposefully in order to effect a change in his environment.[23]

Inasmuch as the social position of women was ratified by Islam and its *Sharī'ah*,[24] ar-Raḥḥāl and his 'a companions, by persisting in their ideas, unavoidably drew upon themselves the charge that they were subverting religion and morality. They replied that they only aimed at "uprooting the inculcations [of the traditionalists] from the minds of the sons of the people so that they could develop a social consciousness commensurate with their existing condition and would prevent their enemies from monopolizing law and virtue after they have monopolized property, wealth, prestige, and honor."[25]

They also denied the validity and relevance of the *Sharī‘ah* on the ground that its principles were “formulated for a society that existed more than a thousand years ago.” *Sharī‘ah* or no *Sharī‘ah*, they said, change was bound to occur if there were an imperative social and economic need for it.[26]

Apparently underrating the political influence of their opponents, they went further to proclaim that “the era when people believed in the divine guidance of natural events was gone,” and that “it is not religion that moves social life but social life that moves religion.”[27] In other words, they served notice that they now recognized only human situations and human answers. Their increasing audacity infuriated the traditionalists, who were not long in showing their claws.

Ar-Raḥḥāl’s little circle soon found itself wrapped in an outburst of bitterness. The Friday *khuţbas*[28] breathed fire against it in the mosques. Collective *maḍbaṭas*[29] denounced it as a hotbed of infidelity and godlessness. Surely enough it was silenced, but then it had made its mark.

In fact, the circle did not submit. Of this Baghdād was to be reminded with the brief reappearance two years later–in 1927–of *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah*.” We have returned,” its leading article triumphantly announced. “We did not breathe our last as they had imagined!”[30]

In the interval, ar-Raḥḥāl had not lain idle. Restrained from writing, he showed fight in other ways. He was thus instrumental in the founding in mid-1926 of Nādī at-Taḍāmun (The Solidarity Club), which was soon to be involved in events that form a landmark in the revolutionary history of Iraq. Since every step he took was watched, he discreetly kept in the background, and acted through Yūsuf Zainal, a nationalist and a teacher at Baghdād’s Secondary School.[31]

Nādī at-Taḍāmun, which attracted mostly young men of the student class, called in its public program for the unity of youth, the spread of knowledge, the promotion of national manufactures, and the propagation and carrying out of “principles leading to the improvement of the life of the society.”[32] However, information reaching the British Special Service suggested that the club was in point of fact keenly interested in the encouragement of Socialism in Iraq, and that its leaders were in correspondence with the Third International, “the light toward which they must turn.”[33]

In no time Nādī at-Taḍāmun became a rallying point for elements which, in the view of *ash-shabībah*[34], were patriotic in their tendency and, in the view of the rulers, a threat to "the peace and good order of the country." In any case, the club made things more lively in Baghdād during the two years of its existence. Two tempestuous incidents took place at that time which cannot be omitted from this record, and in which both ar-Raḥḥāl and Zainal played a prominent part.

The first incident arose out of the affair of Anīs an-Nuṣūlī.[35] The latter, a Syrian teacher in Baghdād's Secondary School, published a book in January 1927 on the history of the Umayyads. In several passages 'Alī, the cousin of the Prophet, appeared in an unfavorable light. A number of outraged Shī'īs complained about it to the Ministry of Education. The author was asked to excise the passages in question, but he refused to do so, whereupon the ministry ordered him to withdraw the copies he distributed to his students. Some Shī'īs were not satisfied, and pressed to have Nuṣūlī more signally punished. Najaf and Karbala began humming with talk about the book and its author, and the idea spread that the king had decided to dismiss Nuṣūlī. On 30 January 1927, three teachers of the Secondary School and Teachers' Training College presented a written protest to the minister against "the disaster to freedom of thought" resulting from the "bigoted" attitude of the ministry. The response was their immediate dismissal. On the same day, the six hundred students of the Secondary School, roused by the members of Nādī at-Taḍāmun, forsook their books and surged out in an angry street demonstration. Boys of both the Sunnī and Shī'ī sects took part, and a manifesto issued in their name explained to the public that the demonstration was "in no way intended to injure the religious susceptibilities of the various sects but to preserve the right of freedom of thought." Although the immediate sequel was the closure of the school for ten days and the expulsion of a number of students, the latter and the three dismissed teachers were subsequently reinstated. The real import of the whole incident was that the students were initiated into a new form of activity, into what in effect were the rudiments of the art of insurrection, for this was Iraq's first student demonstration. From another point of view, this was also the young generation's first blow on behalf of freedom of expression.

As it turned out, the incident of January 1927 served as something of a rehearsal for the furious demonstrations that broke out in Baghdād on 8 February 1928–demonstrations memorable not so much on their own account or for Royal Ordinance No. 13 of 1928, which sanctioned the flogging of schoolboys that "threatened the peace of the land," as for one of their little-noticed sequels: they brought together ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ, Mahdī Hāshim, and Zakī Khairī, then mere restless and discontented youths but, in the future, founders and leaders of the Iraqi Communist party. Flayyeḥ and Hāshim met in the Sarāi police station to which they were hauled along with other demonstrators, and it is there that they heard of Khairī and of the bodily injuries he had suffered at the hands of Colonel Prescott's mounted policemen.[36]

The immediate cause of the demonstration was Sir Alfred Mond. An ardent supporter of the Zionist movement, Mond had been traveling in Palestine and planned to visit Iraq in order, it was announced, to "study its agricultural conditions." On the eve of his arrival, at a hurriedly summoned meeting of Nādī at-Taḍāmun, Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl and Yūsuf Zainal succeeded in convincing their colleagues that Mond's real intention was to create a Zionist colony in Iraq. They proposed, and the proposal was quickly adopted, that a demonstration should be arranged.[37] When on the next day the students started their march through the town, they were followed by a large crowd of people, so that by the time the demonstrators reached the railway station their numbers had swelled to more than twenty thousand. There a police force was waiting for them and began by being menacing, enjoining them to disperse. When they refused to budge, a violent scuffle ensued. Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl was seen at that moment whipping up the emotions of the demonstrators on the Khir Bridge Road, where the excitement raged fiercest, and the policemen were hard put to hold their own against the angry, heaving press. This is the last image we have of ar-Raḥḥāl as a revolutionary, for after that event, with the disbanding of Nādī at-Taḍāmun and except for his reported correspondence with the League Against Imperialism and Colonial Oppression, ar-Raḥḥāl developed a partiality for comfort and settled down wholeheartedly to a dull and routine existence.

Before we leave ar-Raḥḥāl and his companions, we must say a word or two about as-Sayyid's *Jalāl Khālid*,[38] which appeared shortly after the events just chronicled. A novel–Iraq's first–with a factual basis, it was used as a vehicle for the new beliefs and played a role in the ideological formation of the Iraqi youth.

Jalāl Khālid, the hero of the novel, was a sort of indistinct mixture of ar-Raḥḥāl and as-Sayyid, but with the unmistakable traces of the latter's uneven and romantic temper.

As the novel opens, Jalāl Khālid appears as a divided and incongruous person. He was, we are told, dominated by pride, and looked down on his fellows. He paraded in expensive garments and spent much of his time in the halls of Baghdād's big hotels. Even so he genuinely felt with the destitute and the oppressed, but "could do little for them and on that account abandoned himself to despair." He also alternated between a hesitant humanitarian feeling, a grim and fanatical religiosity, and a thorough-going nationalism which made him "hate all peoples except the Arabs."[39] He was, in brief, almost an embodiment of all the sad confusion of his day.

The rest of the novel is an unfolding of Jalāl Khālid's inner transformation, a gradual resolution of the conflict in his character. Things began to happen to him–so the narrative goes–when early in 1919, with a cramp in his heart, he left his unhappy and subjugated native land. His first experience occurred on the boat that took him to India and seems like fate's mischievous way of making merry with his exclusive and outdated views: he saw a Jewish girl of an uncommon beauty and for a time everything else ceased to exist for him. It was an unavowed and unrequited love, but it stirred in him–this is the implied moral of the whole episode–the feeling that he belonged to a human fellowship wider than that of the Arabs or of the whole of Islam.

The real turning point in Jalāl Khālid's life, however, was his association in 1919–1920 with "F. Swami," an Indian "revolutionary" journalist. They met apparently by accident in the lounge of one of Calcutta's hotels, and before they knew it were lost in an animated conversation. The topic of the hour was the industrial strike that had only a few days before gripped the city. The event was something novel to Jalāl, and his curiosity was roused. It turned out that "Swami" had had a hand in inciting the working people.

He said so to Jalāl, thus conveying that he gave him his trust without hesitation. “What would you say,” Swami went on, “if you knew that there is in the world today a social doctrine with a strong following and a vigorous press, and that it has penetrated into the factories and won the minds of all the workers?” Jalāl did not know. There were no workers in his land. “There are only hungry peasants in Iraq but they are contented,” he brought out timidly at one point. “And being Moslems,” rejoined Swami reproachfully, “they no doubt believe that contentment is a gain and acceptance of one’s portion in life a duty.”[40]

They had many long talks subsequently. Once as they were approaching Calcutta’s main Hindu temple, Swami turned to Jalāl and said with fervor:

> These temples with the art that has fascinated the writers of Europe of what use are they to us Indians today? There are more of them than there are schools for the people. And the dumb idols that they house, what good can they do? The people rush to them in the hours of adversity seeking a protection that they never afford. . . . What does our religion teach but Nirvana and the renūrīciation of existence . . . ? And has it not parted us from our brother Moslems just as their religion has parted them from us? . . . We, who aspire for the emancipation of our people and all the oppressed peoples of the East . . . have cut ourselves free from this religion. . . . We have cut ourselves free from it, I tell you, and war upon its culture. But who are we? Only a minority of the educated class whom the people follow because of the extremism of our political ideas. . . . If only we were more numerous, we would rise and carry the day and then take hold of the people and drive them with whips towards civilization and the free and true life and this would not be a distress to them nor an injustice but a mercy and a resurrection.[41]

Jalāl Khālid did not answer him. Much perturbed, he was turning over in his mind what he had just heard and wondering whether this was indeed the reality of religion and whether religion was truly the torment of the East.

Jalāl Khālid was not convinced. But he was now increasingly tortured by doubts and fell a prey to a “ vague and obscure inner turmoil,” At times the

ideas of his Indian friend seemed to overtake him, at other times the old notions, as if catching him unawares, would reassert themselves. . . .

Here the Iraqi uprising of 1920 intervenes and Jalāl, momentarily with no thought for anything else, hurries back home, warming himself with bright but unsubstantial hopes. Unavoidable failure attends the uprising, and Jalāl falls into the black depths of disillusion and despair. He shuts himself out from the world and surrenders himself to his books. When he comes forth from his seclusion two years later, he is an entirely different man. He has found his salvation in the ideas of the Indian revolutionist. He seeks now the means to put them into practice. But his friends turn a deaf ear to him and dub him an extremist. Shallow hearts and pampered creatures! One is taken up in making money so that he can get married. Another has grown too fond of comfort and is impervious to anything else. And the others have "agreed to disagree" and can only moan and groan as if moans and groans have ever changed the life of a people. "So all your enthusiasm was nothing but bubbles bursting in the air!" he cries out, deeply hurt. And on this bitter note the novel ends.

The depression and bitterness that permeate the closing pages of *Jalāl Khālid* mirror the feelings that were taking hold of ar-Raḥḥāl's circle as those pages were being written. The circle was, in fact, breaking up. Some of the reasons are not hard to seek. The constraints by the government, the still potent thinking of the traditionalists, the torpor of the larger body of the people–all these factors no doubt dampened their enthusiasm. Other reasons for what happened may be gleaned from a self-portrait that ar-Raḥḥāl volunteered. "I was," he said, "only an amateur. Besides I have always been more interested in theory, in the main lines of things . . . and I am more an introvert than an extrovert. . . . And then, to tell you the truth, I delight in being idle."[42] It also appears that there was not enough likemindedness among the members. They pulled different ways, disagreed, and parted company. It is an all-too-familiar Arab condition. Al-Kawākibī had diagnosed it long before. "Each of us," he wrote in 1900, "has become a nation in himself."[43]

In any assessment of ar-Raḥḥāl's contribution to the growth of communism in Iraq, due account must be taken of the following considerations:

1. In the 1920s there was practically no communist literature in Arabic, and the Iraqis who could read in any Western language were extremely few. From this it can be readily appreciated how singularly fitted to help the cause of communism was ar-Raḥḥāl, with his unique command of German, English, Turkish, Persian, and Arabic.

2. Zakī Khairī, one of the leading Communists of Iraq at the present time and a member of the first Central Committee of the Communist party in 1935, was introduced to Communist thought by ar-Raḥḥāl.[44]

3. ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ, a founder of the party, an editor in 1935 of *Kifāḥ-ush-Shaʻb* ("The Struggle of the People"), the party's first official mouthpiece, and a trainee of KUTV,[45] was a member of the ar-Raḥḥāl-influenced Taḍāmun Club.[46]

4. Ḥusain Jamīl, who had a prominent role in the founding of the socialistically inclined *AI-Ahālī ("The* People") in 1932 and the similarly oriented National Democratic party in 1946, also associated with ar-Raḥḥāl in the Taḍāmun Club and the Nuṣulī and Mond demonstrations.[47]

5. Amīnah ar-Raḥḥāl, member of the Central Committee of the Communist party in 1941–1943 and, incidentally, one of the first women of Baghdād to unveil, is the sister of ar-Raḥḥāl.[48]

6. ʻAbd-ul-Qāder Ismāʻīl, a founder of *Al-Ahālī*, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist party in 1959–1963, and an editor of *Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb* ("The Union of the People") in 1959–1960, began his revolutionary career in the Taḍāmun Club.[49] Moreover, he and his brother, Yūsuf Ismāʻīl, who was also high in Communist ranks,[50] were cousins of ar-Raḥḥāl's principal companion, Maḥmūd Aḥmad as-Sayyid, the author of *Jalāl Khālid*.

7. ʻAbd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm, a founder of *Al-Ahālī* and the leader of the Marxist-oriented National Union party in 1946–1947, was also a cousin of Maḥmūd Aḥmad as-Sayyid.

Obviously the facts just cited also point to the importance of the extended family in the social life of Iraq in the 1920s, and particularly as a means for the propagation of ideas.

13

PYOTR VASILI AND THE BAṢRAH AND NĀṢIRIYYAH COMMUNIST CIRCLES

At this point attention must be directed to a man who appears to have been active on behalf of communism even before Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl's circle was formed, and whose work in southern Iraq was to lead to distant results: Pyotr or Petros Vasili.[1]

Vasili was an Assyrian who grew up and was educated in Tiflis, Georgia, to which city his father had migrated from 'Amadiyyah in northern Iraq in Ottoman days. Like ar-Raḥḥāl, Vasili was skilled in many tongues. He knew Russian, Georgian, Assyrian, Persian, Turkish, and Arabic. But what distinguished him from ar-Raḥḥāl and, of course, made all the difference, was that he was a professional revolutionary.

Vasili came to Iraq by way of Persia in 1922 or thereabout. He did not stay long in any one place. During the decade that ended with his banishment from Iraq in 1934, he lived in Baṣrah, Baghdād, Ba'qūbah-a center for the estates of Baghdād's landed families–in Kurdish Sulaimāniyyah, and then again in Iraq's seaport, and finally in Nāṣiriyyah, a town renowned for its free and indomitable spirit. As far as one could tell, he earned his living by working as a tailor. But he was an unusual kind of a tailor for, in a fashion so characteristically unbourgeois, he took time out, while in Nāṣiriyyah, to teach his competitors the modern methods of tailoring, which earned him some popularity among the local inhabitants. He also mixed with the poorer classes and showed great interest in their conditions, and was known to have made frequent visits to the peasant countryside in the Muntafiq region. He selected his companions in Nāṣiriyyah and Baṣrah from among the members of the National party, a party that has always been in the vanguard of the Iraqi struggle against British influence.

It was, as far as could be ascertained from the records, only in 1932 that the police discovered that Vasili was a Communist preacher. An agent of the British Special Service reported him in January of that year as being in communication through an Assyrian motor car driver named Ya‘qūb with a professor of Oriental propaganda at the University of Baku by the name of Filimonov, who was then living in Kermanshah.[2] Subsequently, he was found to be in close terms with Kirchin and others of the Soviet Trade Agency in Persia.[3]

It is not certain whether Vasili was instrumental in the formation of the first Communist circle of Baṣrah, which appeared in 1927–at the time of his second sojourn in that seaport-and which chose Nādī ash-Shabībah (The Youth Club) as the center of its activities. In this connection it would help to cite the statement given to the police on 22 January 1934 by ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Kihaṭīb, a member of that circle, a teacher of physics at Baṣrah’s Secondary School in 1927, and an *agent provocateur* in 1934.[4]

> Prior to the year 1927 [said al-Khaṭīb] there was no party in Baṣrah that knew anything about communism. . . . I created such a party and taught its members the Communistic teachings. . . . I founded it, organized it, and enrolled its candidates. Our affairs spread even to Nāṣiriyyah and Samāwah. . . . The most active of my associates were Zakariyyah Eliās Dūkā, Yūsuf Salmān, Dāūd Salmān, Ghālī Zuwayyid. . . .[5] The photographs of all these persons and their applications for admission to the Communist party are in the Soviet Consulate at Ahwāz. I left them there myself. . . .[6]

One would be justified in declining to accept al-Khaṭīb’s version without some reserve. There is no proof that he originated the Baṣrah society, but whether the initiative was Pyotr Vasili’s cannot now be ascertained. Al-Khaṭīb appears to have been brought over to communism by revolutionaries from Muḥammarah, a city to the south of Baṣrah on the Persian side of Shaṭṭ al-‘Arab, and then the “seat” of a certain Dr. Tomaniantz, who ostensibly practiced medicine since his arrival there in 1921, but had been, according to the British Special Service, the “President of the Extraordinary Commission of the Soviet” in Kharkov prior to its fall

to Denikin's White army, and was at this time in close connection with Palutkin, the Soviet consul at Ahwaz.[7] What points to the probability of influence from Muḥammarah–although this may be no more than an evidence of the interconnection of Communist fraternities–is al-Khaṭīb's intimate friendship in the twenties with Muḥammad Ghulūm, a Persian school teacher in Muḥammarah and a supporter of Bolshevism.[8] Al-Khaṭīb himself was of Persian origin, and holder of passports from both Iraq and Persia.

On the other hand, it is beyond dispute that at least three of the persons named by al-Khaṭīb in his statement of 22 January 1934, that is, Yūsuf Salmān, Dāūd Salmān, and Ghālī Zuwayyid, were introduced to communism by Pyotr Vasili. All three were from Nāṣiriyyah but worked or had dealings in Baṣrah, and soon after the organization of the Baṣrah society formed the core of the Nāṣiriyyah Communist circle which came into being around 1928 and provided in the years to come the perseverence that is so rare in Iraq and that was to keep alive the few seeds that had been sown. Indeed, the place that Pyotr Vasili occupies in the history of Iraqi communism rests primarily on the fact that it was at his hands that Yūsuf Salmān had his first lessons in communism, for Yūsuf Salmān or, more accurately, Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf, is none other than the now legendary "Fahd," the real builder of the Iraqi Communist party and its secretary general from 1941 till his death on the gallows with two of his comrades in February of 1949.[9]

The Baṣrah and Nāṣiriyyah Communists first showed signs of life in early 1929. They then counted hardly more than a dozen young men. Of communism they knew only a few catchwords and some simple general thoughts, but their ardor was not the less intense on that account. Instead of quietly expanding their ranks and studying more closely the ideas that had fascinated them, they hastened to assault the religious powers of the country. In this they were much like men who enter a river without knowing its depth.

With due regard to the susceptibilities of the police, then still under British control, they launched their attack in "bourgeois-democratic" colors, using as spearhead a formally unexceptionable association that they put up for the purpose: the Association of Liberals–Jam'iyyat al-Aḥrār–or, as it

soon came to be more fittingly styled, the Anti-Religious or Al-Lādīhī party.[10]

Introduced in 1929 by the Nādī ash-Shabībah-the Youth Club-a club in which the young men of the town foregathered to discuss the varied new-fashioned theories that were beginning to percolate into Iraqi social life, the new association at once proclaimed its attachment to the traditional bourgeois principles of "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality" and challenged Iraqis, having been "born free," to "live free." In the program which it simultaneously made public and which, by the way, is the earliest statement of Communist intentions on record, it enuriciated as its aims:

(1) to liberate the mind, the soul, and the body, and to propagate by every legal means the freedom of thought, speech, and action;
(2) a) to work unsparingly by all lawful methods for the separation of religion from all temporal affairs, i.e., from " politics," "education," "family life," etc.
b) to protest strongly . . . against any religious action injurious to the unity of the people.
(3) to spread religious tolerance . . . in all the Arab countries . . .
(4) to realize its aims through legislative changes . . . and by participation in parliamentary elections . . .
(5) . . . to expose how far the clerics have deviated in their behavior from the original essence of religion, considering that the religions have been the principal cause of discord and that the sublime aim of the association is to unite the scattered forces of the people. . .
(6) to hold public gatherings with a view to imparting to the people the most modern scientific and social ideas . . . and acquainting them with the latest international developments . . .
(7) to liberate the Arab woman from the fetters of degradation and ignorance. . .
(8) . . . to promote a greater fellow-feeling among the people . . .
(9) to encourage only Arab national schools and to regard all Arab countries as one country.[11]

As we read the program, which, on a reliable report, was inspired by Communists from the Lebanon, [12] our thoughts are involuntarily drawn

back to the anticlerical tendencies that appeared in that country in the months after the 1908 Young Turk Revolution.[13] But anticlericalism is evidently not the only, even if the principal feature, of the program. There is, for one thing, its pervasive liberal bias. There is its feminist note–really less of a link with ar-Raḥḥāl's campaign than a mirroring of an aspiration become general among the educated youth of the time. There is also its distinct pan-Arab orientation-a point of considerable interest-but more on this later.[14] Of greater relevance at this point is the tone of moderation that permeates the entire document. The men of religion are denounced, but religion itself is spared, and the denunciation is far from violent. The accent throughout lies on "lawful methods" and parliamentary action, and there is not the least hint of a desire to subvert the existing political order.

This restraint contrasts sharply with the vehemence or "left-infantilism" that marked the new association's actual campaign. Almost from the beginning, its advocates strayed beyond the limits of the program and missed no opportunity to parade the most radical antireligious views. While they continued to call the people to brotherhood irrespective of their religion, they took little pains to conceal that they ultimately aspired at nothing short than the annihilation of all religious feeling. In cutting speeches they linked religion to misery, showed the prophets to have been nothing but selfish in their own time, and declared themselves sickened to see how priests and *'ulamā'* continued to fool the people. In revolutionary verses they sang of the fall of God:

> And the people came in droves
> and asked–not knowing
> who had fallen:
> "Who is this? Tell us, we implore."
> "It is a God," we said, "that tyrannized
> and whom land and sea have banished."[15]

Summing up their tenets, a contemporary police memorandum tersely affirmed: "They believe in no religion and any sin before them has no value. Their talk and principles are such that in the long run they might not care even for the government."[16]

That such an unbridled agitation should be the subsequence of a comparatively measured program may be due to the circumstance that the program was drawn up before–but implemented after–the adoption of the uncompromising policies of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern. The explanation may, on the other hand, lie in the predilection of Iraqis to go to extremes in all the things they undertake.

Be that as it may, Jam‘iyyat al-Aḥrār’s achievements were painfully meager. It did raise clamor enough to cause Baṣrah’s inspector of police to remark at one point that its ideas were being discussed “in every place of gathering,” but the only tangible result was “hot words between the parties.” It did also succeed for a while in attracting quite a number of young men from the middle walks of life–mostly minor government officials of the Moslem and Christian faith[17]–but not a few of these had before long a change of heart for fear of getting into trouble with the authorities. Others, however, did not draw back, although warned by their parents that they would be turned out of the house. From the port workers and peasants of the south, to whom the association had chiefly addressed itself, it received scarcely any response. All its enthusiasm left them cold.

In this, their first endeavor, the Communists obviously went far beyond the feeling of the people, and their efforts only strengthened the class that they desired to weaken. For though the people had for some time ceased to show the same respect for their *‘ulamā’* and priests as formerly, and begun to look upon them more as a burden than a source of comfort, they were not yet disposed to relish assaults upon the foundation of their faith. The clerics themselves welcomed such assaults, rather than dreaded them, for they saw in them a means of reinforcing their waning prestige. This the Communists soon realized and late in 1929 desisted from their course.

The lesson once absorbed was not easily forgotten. “The question of religion,” warned six years later the organ of the first Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist party,

> bears intensely upon the social revolution for which we work. But in the struggle against our enemies we adhere to a plan and in its light determine where to begin and how to end this struggle. Accordingly, we do not permit you, Comrades, to give your attention to this issue at present or to touch upon it when addressing the people, the latter

having not yet attained the perspective that would make a forthright discussion of such a matter feasible.[18]

In subsequent decades one would in vain search for a definite Communist expression on religion. Apart from traces of an inconclusive discussion conducted in 1954 in the seclusion of the Ba‘qūbah prison,[19] there is not in the mass of Communist records that fell into the hands of the authorities a single reference to that subject, nor is the question once broached in the open Communist literature of the time. The Communists had apparently come to the conclusion that religion could best be combatted by being ignored.

14

THE FOUNDING OF THE IRAQI COMMUNIST PARTY

With the sudden and heavy decline in 1929 of international commodity prices, the values of Iraq's dates, grain–indeed, of all exports–went down, and by the summer of 1930 had sunk on an average by more than 40 percent.[1] The slump affected state revenues and led to the discharge of employees, the reduction of salaries, and the increase of taxation.[2] The wage rates of unskilled labourers were also reduced at the Baṣrah Port, in the railways, and in the oil fields.[3]

By the end of 1930, as the depression grew worse, it became evident that Communist ideas had gained "some ascendency"[4] among the youth of Iraq. In the south, the Baṣrah and Nāṣiriyyah circles, no longer shackled by antireligious views, began to make headway, and by 1933 counted between them, according to a Communist source,[5] no fewer than sixty members. In Baghdād, young men, who since 1929 had been working on an individual basis and more or less discreetly, became now more open in their comments and were soon to show signs of making common cause.

At this time–the early thirties-the Baṣrah circle was led by Ghālī Zuwayyid, a slave and agent of the Sa'dūns, the renowned Iraqi family that provided in the nineteenth century the shaikhs *al-mashāyikh*[6] of the Muntafiq tribal confederation. Two other leading members of this circle were Sāmī Nāder Muṣṭafa, an elementary school teacher, and 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Khaṭīb, whom we have already met and who was then in Moscow attending KUTV.[7] The heart and soul of the Nāṣiriyyah circle was Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf, successively a clerk, a "globe-trotter" (in 1929–1931, obviously in the service of the revolution), a mechanic, and finally in 1934–1935 a miller and seller of ice.[8]

In Baghdād, the Communists, or those who thought of themselves in this light, tended in the course of 1929–1934 to attach themselves to one or the

other of three groups. One group–which, for convenience, we will call Baghdād Group 1, was led by ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ, a tailor and a trainee of KUTV;[9] Qāsim Ḥasan, an ex-government clerk and a law student; and Mahdī Hāshim, who since 1929, when he worked as a wireless operator at Nuqrat as-Salmān in the Southern Desert,[10] had established durable connections with the Nāṣiriyyah circle. Another group-Group 2–included Yūsuf Ismāʻīl, a law student; Nūrī Rūfāʼīl, a secondary school teacher; and Jamīl Tūma, a railway engineer, and through the latter, who served on the line Baghdād-Nāṣiriyyah-Baṣrah, the group was loosely linked with the southern Communists. The third group developed around Zakī Khairī, a customs official and a disciple of Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl, the first Iraqi Marxist.[11]

The "genealogy" of these groups is traced in the accompanying chart [Table 14-1]. There is clearly a "line of influence" linking Baghdād Group 3–through Zakī Khairī–to the Taḍāmun Club, and–through Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl–to the *Saḥīfah* Group, and ultimately–through Arsen Kidour–to the left wing of the Armenian Hentchak party. Baghdād Group 1 was caught in the same current, but fed also on additional channels originating at KUTV, Moscow; the League Against Imperialism, Berlin; and the Communist Committee of Beirut–all offshoots of the Comintern. Baghdād Group 2 owed much to the Workers' School at Boston, Massachusetts, but more to the Baṣrah and Nāṣiriyyah circles which, as already noted, were indebted probably to Dr. Tomaniantz at Muḥammarah, and surely to Professor Filimonov at Kermanshah and the roving Pyotr Vasili–a "string" that again leads to the Comintern.

In the spread of these "lines of influence" two local phenomena played a part. One was the closeness of the Iraqi extended family: its effect has already been exemplified.[12] The other was the intimacy of the *maḥallah*–the city quarter: Maḥmūd Aḥmad as-Sayyid of *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah* Group, ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʻīl of At-Taḍāmun Club, Yūsuf Ismāʻīl of Communist Group 1, ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ and Qāsim Ḥasan of Group 2–all lived in the same quarter, the quarter of Bāb-ish-Shaikh in old Baghdād. This was eventually to assist in impelling the two groups toward a union of forces.

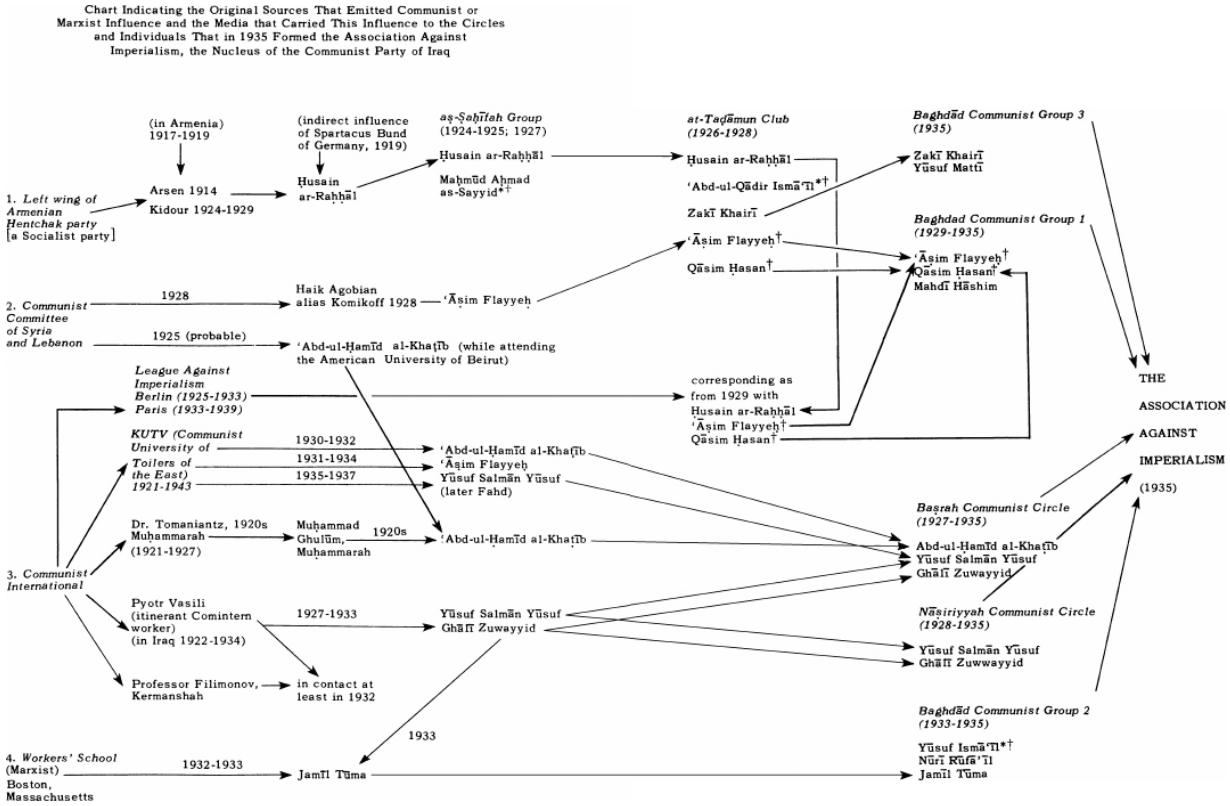
If we now know with a great deal of accuracy how communism reached these Baghdādis and their colleagues from the south, we cannot tell with certainty why they themselves were hospitable to its conclusions.

Communism was not yet as objectively grounded as in the forties and fifties, and was still very much bound up with the personal. Unfortunately, personal motivations are difficult to fathom, the human soul being more often than not labyrinthine in its complexity. There are some facts, however.

In a 1932 letter addressed to the secretary of the high commissioner, the chief of the political police made light of a reported "craze for Bolshevism," and affirmed that the cries that were being heard against "the oppression of the 'colonizers' and the wicked government and their denial of the rights of the 'masses' were "generally the wail of those who have failed to obtain or retain government posts."[13]

Of course, the chief of the political police lays on the colors too thickly. At least his observation is not true of the principal Communists of this time (refer to Table 14-2). Thus Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf was employed as a clerk at the Baṣrah Electric Supply Authority at a monthly salary of 126 rupees (about 9½ pounds sterling) when he joined the Communist movement in 1927; he relinquished the post voluntarily in 1929 to travel abroad as a "globe trotter."[14] Ghālī Zuwayyid had neither the formal qualifications nor the desire to be a government clerk: he had grown up with the tribes of the Muntafiq and imbibed their hatred and contempt for everything that scented of government. 'Āṣim Flayyeḥ never applied for an official position: he had a prosperous tailoring shop with workers under him, and was patronized by the royal family; his employment of workmen, incidentally, put him for a while in bad odor with his Comintern instructors at KUTV: he was accused of exploiting the efforts of others[15] and had to work in Russia for six months as an ordinary laborer before being allowed to resume his revolutionary training.[16] 'Abd-ul-Wahhāb Maḥmūd, who was from a well-to-do family, had a successful law practice. Zakariyyah Elias Duka, Qāsim Ḥasan, Mahdī Hāshim, Jamīl Tūma, Nūrī Rufa'il, and Zakī Khairī lost their government or teaching posts–as is evident from their dossiers[17]–after their espousal of communism.[18] Yūsuf Ismā'īl, Yūsuf Mattl, and Ḥasan 'Abbās al-Karbas were still in their student days and had not yet been overtaken by the weakness for public employment. Samī Nadir Muṣṭafa's Communist connections went undiscovered until the forties, and he remained secure in his teaching job at Baṣrah.

TABLE 14-1



*Member of the same extended family.

†Persons living in the same quarter of old Baghdād, the quarter of Bāb-ish-Shaikh.

TABLE 14-2

Principal Members of the Various Circles Which in 1935 Came under the Association Against Imperialism, in Effect the Nucleus of the Communist Party of Iraq

Name	*Nation*	*Religion*	*Date and place of birth*	*Profession*
Nāṣiriyyah Circle (set up in 1928)				
Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf[a]	Arab of Chaldean origin	Christian	1901, Baghdād[b]	Ex-clerk with British forces and at Electric Supply Authority; ex-mechanic; seller of ice
Ghālī Zuwayyid[a]	Arab of African origin	Sunnī	1903, al-Baṭḥah village, Muntafiq province	A slave and agent of the Sa'dūn family, ex-leaders of the Muntafiq tribes
Aḥmad Jamāl-ud-Dīn[c]	Arab	Shī'ī (Imamite)	1903, Nāṣiriyyah[d]	Lawyer
Baṣrah Circle (set up in 1927)				
'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Khaṭīb	Persian	Shī'ī	1904, Baṣrah	Secondary schoolteacher; *agent-provocateur* (November 1933-1935)
Zakariyyah Eliās Dūkā	Arab of Chaldean origin	Christian	1904, 'Amārah[b]	Clerk in the Port Directorate of Baṣrah
Sāmī Nādir Muṣṭafa	Arab	Sunnī	1908, Baṣrah	Elementary schoolteacher
'Abd-ul-Wahhāb Maḥmūd	Arab	Sunnī	1908, Baṣrah	Lawyer
Baghdād Circles Group 1 (developed in 1929)				
'Aṣim Flayyeḥ	Arab	Sunnī	1905, Baghdād	Tailor; writer of popular stories

Education	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*	*Prior political affiliation*	*Subsequent history*
American Mission's School, Baṣrah (1914-1916); KUTV, Moscow (1935-1937)	Lower middle class; son of a petty confectioner	1927 (26)	Active supporter, National party	Secretary general of Communist party of Iraq 1941-1949; hanged in 1949
Studied privately with sons of Shaikh 'Abd-ul-Fālih̤ as-Sa'dūn	Slave; of slave parentage	1927 (24)	Member of National party	Member of National Democratic party, 1946-1954; died in 1956
Religious school, Najaf; University of Āl al-Bait[e]	Middle class; son of a religious shaikh	1929 (26)	Member of National party	Judge Superior Court; under 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, Chairman of Consultative Committee for Agricultural Reform
Higher Teachers' Training College, Baghdād; American University of Beirut (1923-1925); KUTV, Moscow (1930-1932)	Lower middle class; son of a shoemaker	1927 (23)	–	Police officer 1936-1947
American Mission's School, Baṣrah	Lower middle class; son of a petty trader	1927 (23)	–	Dropped out of movement in the thirties
Elementary Teachers' Training College, Baghdād	Lower middle class; son of a shopkeeper	1932 (24)	–	Member of Central Committee of Communist party 1945-1948
Law School, Baghdād	Landowning class; son of a well-to-do *mallāk*;[f] brother of the then Minister of Justice Amīn Zakī	1933 (25)	–	Ambassador of Iraq to Moscow under 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim
Turkish elementary school, Baghdād; KUTV, Moscow (1931-1934)	Lower middle class; son of a mulla-craftsman (weaver)	1928 (23)	Member, National party and At-Taḍāmun Club	A founder of Communist party, secretary of the Central Committee 1935; dropped out of movement in 1935

Name	*Nation*	*Religion*	*Date and place of birth*	*Profession*
Qāsim Ḥasan	Arab[g]	Sunnī	1910, ar-Ramādī	Ex-clerk in the Ministries of Education and Finance; law student
Mahdī Hāshim[h]	Arab mother and Turko-Azerbaijani father	Shī'ī	1908, Najaf	Elementary schoolteacher; wireless operator; assistant station master in Iraqi Railways
Ḥasan 'Abbās al-Karbās[h]	Arab	Shī'ī	1910, Najaf	Law student; later lawyer
Group 2 (developed in 1933)				
Jamīl Tūma[j]	Arab of Chaldean origin	Christian	1905, Mosul	Railway engineer
Nūrī Rūfa'īl	Arab of Chaldean origin	Christian	1905, Baghdād	Secondary schoolteacher; engineer in Survey Department
Yūsuf Ismā'īl	Arab mother and Indian father	Sunnī	1911, Baghdād	Law student

Education	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*	*Prior political affiliation*	*Subsequent history*
Law School, Baghdād	Middle class; son of an Ottoman brigadier	1929 (19)	–	A founder of Communist party; in the Soviet Union 1941-1944; secretary of the National Democratic party 1948-1954; ambassador at New Delhi and then at Prague under Qāsim
Secondary at Najaf; course in wireless operation	Lower middle class; son of a peasant subsequently turned *Mu'min*[i]	1929 (21)	–	A founder of Communist party; lost Iraqi citizenship 1937; head of Strikers' Committee Tūdeh party, Iran, 1949; sentenced to death in absentia by Iran; Moscow Broadcaster 1953-1958
Law School, Baghdād	Lower middle class; son of an itinerant petty trader and auctioneer	1931 (21)	–	Joined National Democratic party in 1940s; advocated alliance between Communists and National Democrats after 1958
American University of Beirut (1926-1928) M.I.T. (1928-1931; 1932-1933); Workers' School, Boston (1932-1933)	Middle class; son of a weaver	1932 (27)	–	Dropped out of movement in middle thirties; chief engineer of railways under 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim
American University of Beirut (1928-1930) M.I.T. (1931-1933)	Middle class; son of a small entrepreneur	1933 (28)	–	In International Brigade, Spain 1938; inactive in forties; rejoined party after 1958
Law School, Baghdād; a doctorate in law from Paris	Middle class; son of a business agent of Naqīb al-Ashrāf (Gailānī) family in Baghdād[k]	1933 (22)	–	Deprived of Iraqi citizenship 1937; member of French Communist party in 1940s but reportedly dismissed in 1952 for leftist deviations; a leader of the Peace Partisans of Iraq after 1958

Name	*Nation*	*Religion*	*Date and place of birth*	*Profession*
Group 3 (developed in 1934)				
Zakī Khairī	Arab father and Kurdish mother	Sunnī	1911, Baghdād	Clerk in Customs Department (1928-1935); later newspaperman
Yūsuf Mattī	Arab of Chaldean origin	Christian	1914, Baghdād	Law student; journalist; petty trader
A Baghdādī who, judging from his police dossier, was by far the most active revolutionary in the capital, and who, though not yet formally a Communist nor a member of the Association Against Imperialism, maintained close relations with Baghdād Groups 1 and 2.				
'Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā'īl	Arab mother and Indian father	Sunnī	1906, Baghdād	Lawyer; editor and one of original founders of *Al-Ahālī*

Education	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*	*Prior political affiliation*	*Subsequent history*
Two years of secondary schooling, Baghdād	Lower middle class; son of a lower grade government employee	1928 (17)	Associated with At-Taḍāmun Club	Member of Central Committee 1935; leader of party 1936-1937; in prison (1935-1936; 1937-1939; 1949-1958); founded "Revolutionary National Committee" 1946; rejoined party in 1948; deprived of citizenship 1955; member of Politbureau of Central Committee of party 1958-1977
Did not complete course at Law School, Baghdād	Lower middle class; son of a small shopkeeper	1934 (20)	–	Member of Central Committee 1935; a member of party after 1958; since Ba'thī Coup of 1963 fate unknown
Law School, Baghdād	Middle class; son of a business agent of Naqīb al-Ashrāf family	1928 (22)	Member of National party and At-Taḍāmun Club	Joined Syrian Communist party in 1941; member of Central Committee of Syrian Communist party (1948-1958); editor of *Ittihād ash-Sha'b* 1958-1960. Member of Central Committee of Iraqi Communist party 1959-1963

[a]Yūsufa nd Zuwayyid were also founding members of the Baqrah Circle.

[b]Originally from a Chaldean village in the Mosul province.

[c]Jamāl-ud-Dīn moved to Baghdād in 1933 and became associated with Mahdī Hāshim of Baghdād Group 1 (see above).

[d]Originally from Najaf.

[e]A school of Moslem jurisprudence.

[f]*Mallāk*: landowner.

[g]Grandfather: Kurdo-Arab.

[h]Joined Group 1 in 1934. Prior to this date and as early as 1929, when he worked as a wireless operator in Nuqrat as-Salmān in the Southern Desert, Mahdī Hāshim had established durable connections with the Nāṣiriyyah circle.

[i]*Mu‘min*: a man of religion.

[j]Tūma, though a Communist, did not join the Association Against Imperialism.

[k]Naqīb al-Ashrāf: marshal of the descendants of the Prophet Muḥammad.

Sources: Qāsim Ḥasan, Mahdī Hāshim, Jamīl Tūma, Nūrī Rūfā’īl, ‘Abdallah Ismā‘īl and a Sa‘dūn Shaikh who prefers to remain unidentified; and *Police Dossiers* Nos. 487, 340, 8083, 7687, 488, 3546, 3067, 272, 2550, 333, 367, 3076, 414, and 479.

As to ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl, it would be enough to repeat here an anecdote that his brother ‘Abdallah, a one-time professor at the Baghdād Law School and son-in-law of the late Prime Minister Jamīl al-Midfa‘ī, relates:[19]

> In 1935 Prime Minister Yasīn al-Hāshimī sent after my brother Khalīl, who then occupied the post of director general at the Ministry of Interior, and bluntly told him that the activities of ‘Abd-ul-Qādir and his articles in *Al-Ahālī*, were beginning to get on his nerves, that ‘Abd-ul-Qādir could have a high place in government if he wished; otherwise he should keep his peace or risk losing his citizenship. Khalīl came home greatly upset and told mother of what had happened. She pleaded with ‘Abd-ul-Qādir not to bring the family to grief or be the cause of its dispersion. “My brothers are numerous; consider me nonexistent,” ‘Abd-ul-Qādir kept on saying. Nothing could make him change his mind. Wherefore father and Khalīl publicly disavowed him and he persevered in his course.

Obviously, insofar as the foremost Communists were concerned, there was little connection between place-hunting and adherence to communism. For more genuine clues we must, therefore, look elsewhere. Perhaps the essential biographical details assembled in Table 14-2 could be of help. At least they suggest a number of points.

Of the sixteen leading Communists of this period, five, it will be noted, belonged to the Christian minority and four others to the numerically dominant but politically underprivileged Shī‘ī sect [see also Table 14-3]. This carries the implication that the exclusion by the existing order–not

necessarily of the individuals themselves but of their religious group in general–from certain roles or benefits may have been a factor in their proneness to communism. It is not without significance in this connection that Mahdī Hāshim,[20] the son of a Shī‘ī *mu‘min*[21] of peasant origin, and in 1935 a founder of the Iraqi Communist party, should eleven years later–and as a full-fledged member of Tūdeh–complain in an article in the Persian paper *Mardam*[22] that “in the whole Iraqi diplomatic corps there are only two Shī‘īs . . . and of the eighty staff officers of the Iraqi army only three come from Shī‘ī families, while 90 percent of the soldiers are sons of the Shī‘ī community (*sic*).”

The point, however, should not be pressed too far. Often the motivation was complex. Shī‘īsm was thus not the only driving force in Mahdī Hāshim: in 1920, while still a boy, he lived through the two long months of the famous siege of Najaf, and when the ordeal was over, he and his family watched helplessly in the street while a detachment of British engineers tore down their house and neighboring dwellings in retaliation for the heavy fire that had been directed at the besiegers from their quarter. In later days hatred for the foreign occupiers came to mean to him the same thing as communism.[23]

Perhaps some may be tempted to make much of the mixed racial ancestry of three out of the seven Sunnī and one out of the four Shī‘ī Communists. But in this respect the Communists were representative rather than unrepresentative of the urban Arabs of Iraq. It would suffice to mention that ten out of the twenty-three Iraqi prime ministers in the period of the monarchy were of mixed blood. In Baghdād in particular, and more so perhaps among the upper and middle classes, there had been for long much racial crossbreeding. This process, which goes on, is of the natural and unconscious variety.

One very interesting point which may be noted in parenthesis is that, in marked contrast to the forties, when the Jews became an important factor in the Iraqi Communist party, there was not at this time or earlier a single Iraqi of the Jewish faith in Communist ranks. While this may be explained by the different conditions of Iraqi and foreign Jewry in the two decades, it could also be attributed to the standing orders of the Oriental Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International on the “Arabization” of the Communist movement in the Near East.[24]

When we turn from the denominational characteristics to the age pattern of the leading Communists, we find that only four were over 25–but not older than 28–at the time of their earliest link with the Communist movement, while the remaining twelve were 25 years of age or younger, that is, were still in the impressionable and idealistic stage of life.

TABLE 14-3

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to the Principal Members of the Various Communist Circles in 1935

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	No.		%	*Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1947 urban population of Iraq*[a]
Moslems				
Sunnīs				
Arabs	4	7	43.8	26.7 (% for Sunnī Arabs)
Kurdo-Arab	1			
African-Arab	1			
Indo-Arab	1			
Shī'īs				
Arabs	2	3	18.8	41.9 (% for Shī'ī Arabs)
Turko-Arab	1			
Shī'ī Persian	1		6.2	3.1
Christians				
Arabized Chaldeans	5		31.2	5.9 (% for all Christians)
Total	16		100.0	

Education

	No.	*%*
No formal education	1	6.2
Elementary	1	6.2
Secondary	4	25.0
College	10	62.6
Total	16	100.0

Class Origin

	No.	*%*
Slave	1	6.2
Lower middle class	9	56.3
Middle class	5	31.3
Upper landowning class	1	6.2
Total	16	100.0

Sex

	No.
Male	16
Female	–
Total	16

Occupation	No.	%
Student	4[b]	25.0
Member of professions	7[c]	43.8
White collar	3[d]	18.8
Craftsman	1	6.2
Slave agent of shaikh	1	6.2
Total	16	100.0

Age Group at Time of Earliest Link with Communist Movement	No.	%
17-20 years	3	18.7
21-25 years	9	56.3
26-28 years	4	25.0
Total	16	100.0

Prior Political Activity	No.
No activity	10
National party, members	3
National party, supporters	1
at-Taḍamūn Club, members	2
Total	16

Formal Revolutionary Training	No.
No training	13
Training at KUTV	3[e]
Total	16

[a]Percentage fot other sects and ethnic groups were as follows: Kurds: 11.8; Turkomans: 3.2; Jews: 7.0; Sabeans: .3; Yazīdīs and Shabaks: .1.

[b]All college (and law) students.

[c]Teachers: 3; engineers: 2; lawyers: 2.

[d]All government clerks.

[e]Two prior to 1935 and 1 after that date.

It is not without significance that one-third of the leading members of the Baghdād circles lived in Bab-ish-Shaikh[25] and that, in the years to come, the Communist party would build in this quarter one of its widest and most stable bases of support. The causal factor is not far to seek: Bāb-ish-Shaikh was the center at Baghdād of the old textile handicraft industry, and had been most adversely affected by the inflow of English cotton goods. More than that, Bāb-ish-Shaikh, containing, as it did, the shrine of the founder of the mystic Qādirī order, attracted pilgrims from as far as India and was, therefore, wider in its horizon and more open to diverse ideas than other quarters.

Also noteworthy is the fact that of the sixteen leading Communists, ten had college education, which connotes the possibility of attraction to the intellectual aspect of Marxism. This is clearly established in the case of the members of Baghdād Group 2, which was weighted on the intellectual side more heavily than all the other groups. Yūsuf Ismā’il, in particular, is

known to have been an assiduous reader of the available English translations of the Communist classics.

Three of the college trainees, it will be observed, studied abroad–an experience which did not, to say the least, tend to increase their attachment to the existing state of things. “My first trip to the United States,” Jamīl Tūma (of Baghdād Group 2) told this writer in 1958, “completely transformed my outlook on life. . . . When I returned, Iraq seemed a dreary barrenness. Its condition cried for change. . . .” His companion, Nūrī Rūfā’īl, reacted similarly. Both attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge–Tūma in the years 1928-1931 and 1932–1933 and Rufa’īl in 1931-1933, that is, in the early years of the depression when a leftist wave swept over American campuses and generated a feverish intellectual excitement. With their old values already corroded, the two Iraqis could not have remained unaffected. They were, in fact, overwhelmed. They flung themselves on any revolutionary book or journal they could get hold of and eagerly attended lectures or joined in discussions organized by radical student groups. But all this was done impatiently and without method. However, during his second sojourn in Cambridge, Tūma took to frequenting the Workers’ School of Boston, which specialized in the propagation of Marxist ideas, and by the time he came back to his native land, he was already convinced that “Iraqi conditions could not be patched up but had to be torn by their roots,” Rūfā’īl, for his part, was so carried away by the new ideas that he neglected his studies, lost his government scholarship, and returned home in a rebellious and bitter mood.[26]

In one instance, interest in communism began at an earlier stage in the process of education and, curiously enough, with a chance remark by a plebeian teacher. “I was fourteen years old and at the elementary school at that time [the year 1925],” said Zakī Khairī (of Baghdād Group 3), who with pinioned wrists and ankles sat near me in the guards’ room of the prison of Ba‘qūbah one June day of 1958,

> I still remember how the instructor–a humble man from the quarter of Albū Shibl–interrupted the reading exercise. The class had just run over passages of an essay in which the author, an old pedagogue called ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Wajdī, painted Bolshevism in very dark colors. “The Bolshevik government,” the instructor explained, “is a government of

> the poor. This is why it is regarded with hatred." . . . I was in a malleable and receptive age and the remark imprinted itself on my thought.

"A government of the poor" was bound to stir the interest of a boy who grew up in poverty and never knew the pleasant side of life. Khairī's father, an inferior public servant, simply could not with his meager income provide adequately for his very large family, notwithstanding the thrift and self-denial of his good wife, a Kurdish peasant woman from Badrah.[27] To make things worse, old Khairī died that year. His family was thrown on its own resources and could weather out this new adversity only thanks to the assistance of a generous uncle. Eventually, however, young Khairī had to leave school before completing his education: one more thing that he laid up in his heart against society. The darkness in which his life was steeped no doubt stimulated Khairī's interest in revolution.

In this regard, however, Khairī was not representative. Of his confederates, only Jamīl Tūma and Qāsim Ḥasan had a truly unhappy childhood. Born of a well-to-do weaver, Tūma never knew need, but his childhood bore the mark of frightening events. In 1915, when he was hardly ten, three of his brothers–who traded in Wan, Turkey–were murdered in "cold blood" by the Turks; and in 1917, after an unsuccessful attempt to escape from Mosul to British-occupied Baghdād, he and his mother were condemned to imprisonment and exile to the Jazīrat Ibn 'Umar,[28] where they spent the last years of World War I.[29] Qāsim Ḥasan, on the other hand, lived in real privation from the time he was six. Two misfortunes had taken away his family's main providers: in the course of the war his father, a brigadier and commander of the Ottoman troops in northern Iraq, died of poison, and in 1920 his uncle, a partisan of Sharīf Ḥusain, was massacred by the Wahhābis at the conclusion of the Battle of Taraba in Najd.[30] In the years that ensued, it seemed to Qāsim Ḥasan as if he had become wedded to adversity, for in the wake of privation came ill health and a period of intense anxiety, and it was–we should add–a very weak and consumptive Qāsim Ḥasan that joined the cause of revolution–a condition that rendered him in the eyes of the authorities potentially the more "dangerous." "He

has," the chief of the political police noted in 1935, "the kink of the chronic TB patient against authority . . . and the world in general."[31]

Except for Ghālī Zuwayyid of the Baṣrah circle, of whom more presently, and ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb Maḥmūd, who was from an affluent landowning family, the other leading Communists shared neither the wretchedness and anguish of the mass of Iraqis nor the ease and abundance of the privileged few, but led the grayish life characteristic of the middle and lower-middle-class families to which they belonged. As for Ghālī Zuwayyid, he was born–as already noted–a slave. He was, however, never out of funds, and lived from the income of a piece of land which he owned in the province of Baṣrah.[32] A Saʻdūn shaikh, who lived with him under the same roof and who prefers to remain nameless, told this writer that Zuwayyid spent liberally from his own pocket on Communist work and always helped his needy colleagues. But quite apart from his means of living, and although his masters seldom gave him offense, Zuwayyid did sense–and poignantly–the humiliation of his social status.

For revolutionary purposes his humble birth was, however, an advantage. The sharecropping peasants in the palm groves and the *maṣālīkh*– the poor workers–at the port, who were so hard to gain over to the new cause, felt at ease with him. His phrases were not foreign to them and he understood the common things of their everyday life.

Of the other Communists, only his companion from Nāṣiriyyah, Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf, was as close to the people. Yūsuf, whose life and that of early as of later communism intimately blend, had not, like Zuwayyid, come from the lowest rung of the social ladder; but he took pains to avoid everything which could distinguish him from the laboring classes. To learn their ways and their idioms, and to appreciate their point of view, he went to work as an ordinary mechanic. With a character which was almost fierce in its energy but simple and free from deceit, he succeeded in winning their confidence and having himself accepted as one of them. From that moment nothing made him happier than being called a "worker." The word seemingly possessed a spell that exalted him in his own thought.[33]

Characteristically, the first proclamation to appear in Iraq with the badge of the hammer and sickle, and which Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf himself wrote in longhand and posted in eighteen different places in Nāṣiriyyah town on the night of December 13, 1932,[34] was signed simply "A Communist Worker."

The proclamation bore the watchwords: “Workers of the World Unite! Long Live the Union of Workers’ and Peasants’ Republics of the Arab Countries,”[35] and, as could be expected, provoked a great deal of lively talk. “Workers!” the proclamation began,

> . . . the unemployed fill the streets. . . . Their women and children have nothing to eat. . . . Has the government contemplated helping them in this cold weather? Nothing of the kind has happened . . . for the government is only a band against the people. . . .
>
> Workers! The people have rights which they can only secure by force. Such lessons are laid down in history. . . . Nobody can feel the misery of the worker except the worker himself. Nobody can know the pain of hunger except the one who is famished. Why should we blame the persons who are eating the fruit of our labor . . . when we ourselves are encouraging them to rob us? . . . Do not be deceived by the name of so-and-so as he is from the notables or he is rich or he is from a great family, for all the vices come from great families, who are alleged to be honorable when there is no honor except in work and no one is honorable except the worker and the peasant. . . .
>
> Comrades! Have courage! For we are struggling for our honor and our life and the good of the future generations. Forward, Workers! Forward to fruitful action, to freedom, and well-being!

In the following months more proclamations made their appearance in Nāṣiriyyah. Word-of-mouth propaganda also increased, and copies of an Arabic translation of the Communist Manifesto circulated from hand to hand. The authorities, by now disturbed, began searching everywhere for Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf and finally–on 21 February 1933–caught up with him. To their surprise, unlike other detainees, he did not cringe or show any fear. “When questioned,” noted the political police in an entry in his dossier bearing that date, “he admitted he is a Communist, and gave a tirade about the ‘capitalists’ and the ‘toiling masses’”[36]

Men like Yūsuf and Ghālī Zuwayyid were an exception, but it was due to them in the first place that Bolshevism began to progress in the south–in Muntafiq, Baṣrah, and Diwāniyyah–at a slow pace, of course, but surely and abidingly. By comparison, Baghdādī Communists seemed at this time

to have been almost standing still. Their struggle was largely confined to the drawing rooms and coffee-houses. They debated at great length and in a spirited manner, but few really understood as yet what actual revolutionary work involved.

The Baghdādis, with their relatively more advanced intellectual preparation, and the southerners, with their practical propensities, would have complemented one another, but until late 1933 the links between them were feeble and irregular. And the Baghdādis themselves carried on each in his own way. “I was an individualist,” remarked later one of them,[37] typically enough, “I liked to teach but not to organize.”

Before long, however, contacts became more frequent, and southerners and Baghdādis gradually realized the invaluable advantage of a union of forces. But no initiative was taken to create a center around which the various circles could rally until a number of events occurred which, from their point of view, sensibly changed the situation.

On November 1, 1933, for one thing, Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman and the National party unexpectedly withdrew from political life. The National party, it will be remembered, held a special place among Iraqis. If only for this reason, the early Communists who had come from its ranks[38] never severed their connection with it. On the contrary, they found in it an ideal vehicle for disseminating their views, and hoped eventually to influence it in the appropriate direction. In fact, the National party by its determined antagonism to British power already served their immediate needs.

Now that the National party had made its exit, the Communists were left without a forum or a legal base of action. Moreover, no genuine opposition party remained in the field. By pure coincidence, ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Khaṭīb of the Baṣrah circle, who had completed the year before a course of study at KUTV, arrived at Baghdād from Moscow at this juncture or, to be precise, on 18 November.[39] For reasons of his own, which will become obvious presently, he encouraged the incipient trend toward union.

The famous boycott of the British-owned Baghdād Electric Light and Power Co., which broke out on December 5, 1933, and lasted till January 2, 1934, acted as a further stimulus. The boycott resulted in the liquidation of the existing trade unions, but brought the Communists together for the first time. Qāsim Ḥasan and Mahdī Hāshim of Baghdād Group 1,[40] Yūsuf Ismā‘īl, Nūrī Rūfā’īl, Jamīl Tūma of Baghdād Group 2, and ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd

al-Khaṭīb of the Baṣrah circle met clandestinely on December 27, 1933, in Qāsim Ḥasan's house in the Bāb-ish-Shaikh quarter of Baghdād. All they did or could do was to prepare leaflets protesting the confinement and deportation by the government of the leaders of the trade unions, who had agitated in support of the boycott.[41]

Other meetings would have surely followed had the police, who received precise information, not interfered at this point. Some of the conferees were arrested and exiled to distant provincial towns. The others vanished from sight, and the authorities hunted for them in vain.

The informer was none other than ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Khaṭīb who, as the only Iraqi graduate of KUTV at the time, was the man farthest from suspicion. Later, in the fall of 1934 and after he thwarted one other attempt at a Communist coalition, the Communists learned–through friends in the Investigations Department–of his true identity and heed-fully kept out of his way.

It is not altogether clear why al-Khaṭīb turned into an *agent-provocateur*, but it would appear that while still in Russia he inadvertently entered into "dubious connections" and, fearing the consequences, took refuge in the British Embassy in Moscow, which arranged for his travel back to Baghdād at the expense of the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On his return in November 1933, he gave the police a long statement on his experiences and on the persons whom he met or with whom he worked in Moscow and Tashkent.[42] Subsequently he occupied himself in driving Communists into the toils of the police.

Despite repeated setbacks, the Communists resumed before long their attempts to unify their scattered centers. Their comrades that had been exiled to the provinces began trickling back to Baghdād, their eagerness for illegal work still undiminished by the privations they had to endure. On August 18, 1934, a new trainee of KUTV–'Āṣim Flayyeḥ[43]–arrived from Moscow[44] and became, as could be expected, the focus of the new efforts.

At long last, on March 8, 1935, in a meeting at Ra's al-Qaryah in Baghdād, ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ, Mahdī Hāshim, Qāsim Ḥasan, Ḥasan ʻAbbās al-Karbās, Yūsuf Ismāʻīl, and Nūrī Rūfā'īl[45] founded the long-awaited organization: Jamʻiyyat Dudd-il-Istiʻmar[46]–The Association Against Imperialism–obviously named after The League Against Imperialism,

which had its headquarters at this time in Paris, and with which ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ and Qāsim Ḥasan had been corresponding as early as 1929.

On 11 March 1935, shortly after the outbreak of the Diwāniyyah tribal rebellion–which was then beginning to engross the attention of all Iraq–the association issued its manifesto. The manifesto–with which we have chosen to close this chapter–begins, it will be noticed, with a purist revolutionary phraseology, but ends with relatively moderate liberal and "economist" demands:

The Manifesto of the Association Against Imperialism

To the Workers and Peasants, to the Soldiers and Students, to All the Oppressed!

The first Iraqi Revolution[47] rose on our forearms, we the masses of workers and peasants. From our class came the agonies, the sacrifices, the tens of thousands of victims. . . . The benefits went to the financiers, the feudalists, and the higher officials. . . . To our lot have fallen only hunger, cold, and ruthless disease . . . and a horde of tax-gatherers without a touch of mercy or humanity. . . .

Today, the English and the ruling class are partners in a compact that aims at perpetuating the oppression and exploitation from which we suffer. . . . The oil and other raw materials of the country have become a preserve for the English and Iraq has been turned into an outlet for their goods and surplus capital and into a war base directed against neighboring peoples, and against any aspiration for freedom that the Arab countries may entertain. The ruling class, for its part, plunders the proceeds of taxes, misappropriates lands, and builds palaces on the shores of the Tigris and Euphrates. The millions of peasants and workers, in the meantime, continue to starve, and bleed, and writhe in anguish. . . .

We must put an end to conditions grown so unjust and intolerable. We demand a change in the very foundations of life, a momentous change to the advantage of all the productive classes. . . . Let us raise our voice again in the land and let it thunder forth, striking terror into the hearts of our oppressors. . . . Let townsman and villager, worker and peasant, undivided by sect or race and supported by revolutionary

thinkers, march side by side to bring about in the first phase of the struggle:

–the cancellation of all debts owed by the peasants; their deliverance from all onerous taxes; the distribution to their poor of state lands; and the granting to them of the necessary credits;

–the guaranteeing to the workers of freedom of assembly and of speech . . . ; the reopening of their clubs and trade unions; the enactment of a law protecting the workers . . . against arbitrary dismissals and ensuring them against starvation in their old age; and the realization of the eight-hour day in all Iraqi and foreign-owned places of work. . . .

Down with English imperialism! Down with all enslaving treaties! Long live the united front against imperialism and against the oppressors of the peasants and workers!

15

TWO IRAQIS–THREE SECTS

News of the founding of the Association Against Imperialism spread quickly, and such cells as had grown in the different provinces hastened to adhere to it. When in late March 1935 Zakī Khairī joined with his group,[1] hardly any Communist remained who had not come under its wing.[2]

The association, however, never developed into a compact body. In the first place, its leaders possessed qualities scarcely calculated to produce harmony. Yūsuf Ismā‘īl outshone his colleagues by the sharpness of his intellect and his wide reading. “We congratulate Iraq,” exclaimed Khālid Bakdāsh[3] after meeting him in Damascus in 1937, “for raising young men who can think so soundly,”[4] But intellectual superiority is often an unpardonable trait, and then Ismā‘īl was too stubborn and intractable, and seldom yielded to opinions other than his own. Mahdī Hāshim, perhaps the most active member of the association, was a much milder person. To him fell the role of mediating between the more strong-willed of his colleagues, but often with little success. ‘Āṣim Flayyeḥ was the oldest, and though, when it came to formal education he was very backward, having never gone beyond the Turkish elementary school, he already showed undeniable talent as a popular writer, and alone had received methodic training in the art of insurrection. But, according to his friends, Flayyeḥ was high-strung, quick to anger, and impatient of contradiction. The chief of the political police thought worse of him. “Flayyeḥ is a very weak man, a coward, and a fool,” he noted in 1934. “Fickle as he is, he is useless, whether in future he turns against communism or not.”[5] Zakī Khairī was more constant to purpose and the least caring of danger–a distinction that was to land him time and again in prison. But, while capable of devoting himself heart and soul to the cause he had made his own, he was yet–said one of his confederates[6]–“given to cynicism” and disposed to scoff at those who did not measure up to him in

understanding or maturity. His approach was too severe, thought another confederate.[7] Significantly, in his youth, when reading on revolutionary movements in history, the personality that fascinated him most–he himself related to this writer[8]–was that of Marat, the relentless tribune and watchdog of the French Revolution. Qāsim Ḥasan, who also had much say in the association, possessed a very flexible mind, but somehow managed to leave his comrades with the uncomfortable feeling that he seldom aimed where he looked or said what he really thought.

One general–and crucial–shortcoming was that few members of the association knew how to obey. Discipline was entirely foreign to them. Moreover, no common rules guided their actions. A real unity of will could not, under the circumstances, be achieved.

Hardly had the association issued its manifesto when a fissure occurred in its ranks. Disagreement arose over the further course of action to be pursued. Yūsuf Ismā‘īl insisted that the association should for a period focus on building and educating a cadre, and otherwise support the young men of the *Ahālī* in whatever policies or measures they deemed fit to adopt. ‘Āṣim Flayyeḥ felt that the Communists should without delay organize an organ of their own and from the outset clearly distinguish themselves from all other groups. As a result, a certain coldness crept into their relations, and early in April 1935 Yūsuf Ismā‘īl and Nūrī Rufa’īl and their followers withdrew from the association. The Nāṣiriyyah circle sided with them, while the Basrites went their own way.

The three remaining founding members–‘Āṣim Flayyeḥ, Mahdī Hāshim, and Qāsim Ḥasan[9]–tried to check the disintegration that thus set in. They coopted Zakī Khairī and Yūsuf Mattī[10] and made arrangements to publish an underground paper as soon as possible. They also decided to send Qāsim Ḥasan to Moscow to attend the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern as an observer.[11]

A kind of division of labor now took form. Yūsuf Mattī devoted his efforts to Baghdād, Zakī Khairī to Baṣrah and Nāṣiriyyah, and Mahdī Hāshim to ad-Diwāniyyah, Najaf, and the mid-Euphrates generally. The students, craftsmen, and the railway and port workers received most of their attention. Zakī Khairī showed interest also in the armed forces.

TABLE 15-1

First Central Committee
of the Iraqi Communist Party
(May to December 1935)

Name	*Biographical data*
ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ, Secretary	(See Table 14-2)
Mahdī Hāshim	(See Table 14-2)
Qāsim Ḥasan	(See Table 14-2)
Zakī Khairī	(See Table 14-2)
Yūsuf Mattī	(See Table 14-2)

ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ, for his part, was engrossed in preparing for the publication of Iraq's first illegal paper–*Kifāḥ-ish-Shaʻb* ("The Struggle of the People"). There could be no more effective instrument, he felt, for integrating the different cells into one party, explaining the appropriate methods of work, and above all, avoiding the dangers inherent in diverse and muddled views.[12]

Kifāḥ-ush-Shaʻb appeared in July 1935, during the administration of Yasīn al-Hāshimī,[13] and nearly two months after the collapse of the tribal uprisings in the mid-Euphrates.[14] It introduced itself as "the mouthpiece of the workers and peasants" and as a publication of the "Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iraq." Thus, at last, the Communists dropped all obliqueness and employed unambiguously the name now so steeped in historical associations.

The people, *Kifāḥ-ush-Shaʻb* declared, failed to garner any fruits from the uprisings on the Euphrates for one very good reason–the absence from the political battleground of a "revolutionary class party." Such a party had now arisen, but was still in an early stage of growth, and could only attain strength after long years of struggle and experience. It was a party altogether different from what the bourgeoisie had accustomed Iraqis to expect. It did not promise much and accomplish little. It reckoned on force and violence, for it knew well enough that no imperialist nation had ever of its own accord allowed for the rights of a weaker people, just as no class had ever peacefully given up its privileges. It regarded itself as the guardian over the interests of the masses of workers and peasants, and felt duty-

bound to rouse these masses to the injustice of their conditions and raise them to the level of conscious class struggle.[15]

In a subsequent issue, *Kifāḥ-ush-Sha'b* set forth with greater precision the aims of the party. Avowedly relative only to an initial period, the aims included:

1) the expulsion of the imperialists; the granting of freedom to the people, of complete independence to the Kurds,[16] and of their cultural rights . . . to all of Iraq's minorities;
2) the distribution of land to the peasantry;
3) the abolition of all debts and land-mortgages . . . ;
4) the seizure of all properties belonging to the imperialists–the banks, the oilfields, and the railway works among others–and the expropriation of the vast agricultural estates;
5) the concentration of power in the hands of the workers and peasants; and
6) the launching without delay of the social revolution in all other areas of life and the liberation of the people from manifold subjections.[17]

In this statement of aims dated August 1935, the early Communists obviously veered much to the left of the position taken in their manifesto of March 11, 1935,[18] while interestingly enough, at about the same time–July-August 1935–the Comintern, which *Kifāḥ-ush-Sha'b* had saluted as "the leader of the World Revolution,"[19] was officially veering to the right and introducing the "popular-front" and "national-front" policies. Never after, not even at the climax of their power in the months following the 1958 Revolution, did the Iraqi Communists express their demands in a fashion so thoroughly revolutionary.

But it was not the fervor of the Communists that upset Premier Yāsīn al-Hāshimī. *Kifāḥ-ush-Sha'b* made sharp thrusts at him personally. "Do you know," it wrote, for example, on one occasion, "that the prime minister preaches virtue during the day and spends his nights with a little harlot called Mary Kasparkhan?"[20] This and other such references proved too damaging to the *sūfī*[21] image that al-Hāshimī had then been at pains to project.

It was, therefore, with a certain fierceness that the police now hunted for the Communists. The inexperience of the party and the loose discipline that pervaded its ranks, particularly in Baghdād, proved disastrous. The members were simply unable to keep secrets. The different cells mixed without permission. Instead of proceeding cautiously, some of the Communists were more apt to betake themselves to the coffee-house and there openly and "with a ringing voice" read *Kifāḥ-ush-Sha'b* to complete strangers.[22] Before long the party was attracting police agents more than winning followers. In October 1935, 'Āṣim Flayyeḥ and Mahdī Hāshim were caught. On his first taste of prison life, Flayyeḥ lost all further interest in revolution. He gave and kept an undertaking to refrain from any political activity whatever. Meanwhile, in the underground letters passed from hand to hand accusing Qāsim Ḥasan, who had shortly before returned from the Seventh Comintern Congress, of betraying his principles and his party.[23] When in December 1935 Zakī Khairī finally fell into the hands of the police, *Kifāḥ-ush-Sha'b*, which had achieved a circulation of 500, ceased to exist. The disintegration of Iraqi communism seemed almost complete.

16

BEGINNING AGAIN; OR THE COMMUNISTS IN THE PERIOD OF THE COUPS D'ÉTAT (1936-1941)

From the founding of the monarchy in 1921, power in Iraq was, as noted elsewhere, shared in various degrees by the British, the king, the ex-Sharīfian officers-turned-mallāks, and the upper tiers of the *ashrāf-mallāk*, bureaucrat-ma*llāk*, and shaikh-ma*llāk* families. The British had, of course, the paramount hand until the conclusion of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty in 1930. Thereafter the other elements were largely left in control of Iraq's internal life. In 1936, however, a new force burst unexpectedly upon the stage: one morning in October, Bakr Ṣidqī, a general of the army, overthrew the government at Baghdād. The coup plunged Iraq into uncertainty, and ushered in four and a half years of uneasy, faltering, and indirect army rule.

On the day of the coup–the 29th of October–Mahdī Hāshim and Zakī Khairī,[1] whom the authorities had come to regard as "dangerous Communists," lay in prison, Khairī in Kirkūk and Hāshim in Arbīl. Soon they would be set free, but their old associates, Yūsuf Mattī and Ḥasan 'Abbās al-Karbās,[2] were already out in Rashīd Street–Baghdād's main thoroughfare–and in the workers' district of Bāb-ish-Shaikh, rallying their former followers and organizing popular support for the initiative of the army.[3] In this endeavor they worked hand in hand with the men of *Al-Ahālī*, who were closely concerned in the coup and would win half of the portfolios of the new government before the day was over.

The wave of friendly demonstrations that swept many of the Iraqi towns on 2 and 3 November 1936 was indeed the outcome of their common efforts. In certain instances the role of the Communists was even more conspicuous than that of *Al-Ahālī* group. In Baṣrah, for example, it was the Communist leader Ghalī Zuwayyid[4] who set the tune for the crowd of demonstrators.[5] The Communists were also represented on the "Committee

for National and Progressive Reform" that organized plebeian support in Baghdād. But here an independent note was struck. To the beating of the *dammāmas*–drums with a martial sound used in the Shī'ī Husainī processions–throngs of poor and working people marched along with other Baghdādis in Rashīd Street brandishing thick canes and, like the rest, acclaiming the army and "the people's cabinet," but also shouting the Communist-inspired slogans "Bread to the Hungry!" "Land to the Peasants!" and "Death to Criminal Fascism!"[6]

Except for this incident, which embarassed the men of *Al-Ahālī*, the Communists helped the latter at every opportunity and strongly pleaded for them in *Al-Inqilāb–a* paper owned by the poet Muḥammad Mahdī aj-Jawāhirī,[7] and when on 12 November 1936, on their initiative, Jam'iyyat-ul-Iṣlaḥ-ish-Sha'bī–The Association of the People's Reform–was organized, all the Communists made haste to adhere to it.[8]

In a period of "national fronts," and at a time when the Communist parties in Syria and Palestine were lending support to forces noted for their conservative social policies,[9] it would not have made sense for the Iraqi Communists to withhold aid from an association that called for the granting of "democratic freedoms," the encouragement of workers' organizations, and the introduction of a minimum wage, of the eight-hour day, and of a progressive income and inheritance tax.[10]

"To belong to the Association of People's Reform," wrote the Baghdādī communist Yūsuf Ismā'īl[11] in December 1936, "has become a necessity and an obligation. . . ." "It is incumbent upon the intellectuals, the students, the workers, and the peasants," he went on, "to spare no effort . . . to make the association a success."[12] Earlier, the southern Communists had voiced similar views.[13] In January 1937, however, the organ of NIANKP–the Scientific Research Association for the Study of National and Colonial Problems–in Moscow did not approve unqualifiedly of the People's Reformists. "It is necessary to observe," *Revoliutsionnyi Vostok* wrote, "that while they speak of the elimination of exploitation in general, they mean the elimination of one definite form of exploitation, namely feudal exploitation."[14] Referring to their timid agrarian demands ("the reclamation of waste land and its distribution to the peasantry . . . ," "the abolition of unjust agricultural laws . . . ,"[15] etc.), the journal added that "the carrying out of all these measures will not even completely do away with feudal

exploitation."[16] The journal, however, hastened to acknowledge that "for all their purely bourgeois program of struggle against feudalism, the young Iraqi democrats will still run against enormous difficulties . . . ,"[17]

Revoliutsionnyi Vostok's reservations, if known to Iraq's Communists, did not abate their enthusiasm for the People's Reform. Only years later–in 1942–when the association had long become a thing of the past, did they come to regard it more critically, and even with a certain degree of hostility.[18]

But in the fall of 1936 and the winter of 1936–1937, it was precisely because the People's Reformists formed part of the new regime that the Communists concerned themselves so much about its fate. This comes out very clearly in a Communist pamphlet entitled *The Coup of 29 October* which appeared at that time, and which is of some interest on still another score: its anticipation of the policies adopted by the Communists in the months after the 1958 Revolution.

If the new regime was to endure–declared Yūsuf Ismā'īl, the author of the pamphlet–it had to sweep clean from the government and the army all elements lacking in honesty, competence, and "devotion to the masses." It had to pursue and strike down the remnants of the enemy beaten by the coup, and thus deprive them of any opportunity to reorganize. For this "a new, upright, and resourceful Criminal Investigations Department" would be needed. In order to forestall or crush any opposition that might arise, it would not be enough to strengthen the army; a *ḍābiṭah ahliyyah-a* people's curbing force–must be created. Moreover, in the schools only teachers "who could be relied upon to unite the people" should receive appointments. Inasmuch as every new situation creates new enemies, an alliance with "the foreign forces to whose advantage the coup redounded" was also indispensable. In all this, as in carrying out the sweeping reforms promised to the people, the time factor should not be lost sight of: expeditiousness was decisive. The government that "attained power with bombs" should know before everything that "it lives and dies by quick deeds."[19]

But the Communists had exaggerated the popular character of the army officers who were the real backbone of the new regime. The leader of these officers, Bakr Ṣidqī, was animated chiefly by the desire to build a strong army. He may also have toyed with the notion of a military dictatorship. His followers, for their part, talked of "drastic" reforms, but only in general and

vaguely. By belief, by aspirations, by temperament they and the People's Reformists were anything but homogeneous. They had met originally in a feeling not of mutual affection but of common contempt for the government which they jointly vanquished. If they acted later–and for the briefest period–in the same way, they acted from different motives. Even as makeshift allies, the People's Reformists proved eventually inconvenient.

Thus when, in the winter of 1936–1937, the general elections were held, the Reformists found themselves hindered at every turn, and could only with difficulty secure 12 seats out of the 108 that the new Chamber comprised.[20] The Communists, for their part, were not altogether unhappy with the results. For the first time, two men that stood very close to them, ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʻīl and ʻAzīz Sharīf, had won their way to Parliament. Both later attained prominence in the Communist movement, the former as member first of the Syrian and then of the Iraqi Central Committee, the latter as leader of the Peace Partisans of Iraq.

But Communists and Reformists were yet fated for utter disillusionment. On 17 March 1937, General Bakr Ṣidqī suddenly and unexpectedly opened an attack on the Communists. There were people–he began–who talked of "a predisposition for communism in this country." "But where are our factories and our workers?" he queried. "Where are our capitalists and the capital with which they could cause oppression . . . ?" Those who favored communism, therefore, could only "belong to one of two groups–either people who are naive and wanting of knowledge . . . or people who intend evil by the country . . . and are beyond doubt moved by foreign hands." He ended up on a note of menace. "Communism," he said, "is incompatible with royal government . . . and I, as chief of the Reform Force . . . hereby declare that the army is prepared . . . to crush any movement–Communist or otherwise–which infringes upon the throne . . . in however slight a degree."[21]

The People's Reformists could not have read Bakr Ṣidqī's words without misgivings. Clearly he was out to placate the more conservative and nationalist-inclined elements of the population. Clearly he aimed beyond the Communists who, by themselves, were still–when all is said–a force of no considerable account. In hurriedly convoked meetings, the Reformists settled down, therefore, to deliberate how they should counter Bakr Ṣidqī's move. It would appear–if police reports are accurate–that they considered in

earnest withdrawing altogether from Cabinet and Parliament.[22] But counsels of supineness ultimately prevailed.

There were, however, reactions on another plane. As if in answer to Bakr Ṣidqī's query "Where are our workers?" the workers at the Port struck on 24 March 1937, and were followed on 5 April by the laborers of the National Cigarette Co. in Baghdād and of the Iraqi Petroleum Co. at Kirkūk. The strikes then spread in rapid succession to the various drilling areas and oil-pumping stations, to the Kūt barrage, the Baghdād railway workshops, the Najaf weaving factories, and the Ḥabbāniyyah military base.[23]

The movement, though embracing most of the important industrial projects in the country, involved no more than 20,000 workers, but denoted nonetheless that the infant laboring class was beginning to make its mark, and had already discovered the inherent power of what was still in Iraq a new mode of action.

The strikes were only in part politically motivated, for many of the workmen suffered terribly, and the authorities would not enter into their grievances. The *maṣālīkh*–"the naked ones" who loaded and unloaded cargo at the Port–to cite one specific example–earned as little as 45 fils (11 d.) for fourteen hours of work.[24] More generally, unskilled industrial male laborers received from 40 to 60 fils (10d. to Is.2d), and children from 10 to 40 fils (2½d. to 10d.) for a 10-hour day.[25]

But if the ground for the strikes had been prepared by discontent, the initiative came partly from the Communists–in particular, from the group of Ghālī Zuwayyid in Baṣrah[26] and that of Zakī Khairī in Baghdād,[27] and partly from the "left" members of the Association of People's Reform, such as ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismā'il, and more especially Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Qazzāz, the founder of the Iraqi labor union movement.[28]

Events now began to move toward their logical denouement. On April 8, 1937, while the strike wave was still at its crest, Reformist al-Qazzāz was arrested and banished for one year to the town of ʻĀnah in the northwest of Iraq.[29] On 6 May, the moderate Communist, Yūsuf Ismāʻīl, bowed out of the scene by accepting, on the advice of Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, Reformist member of the Cabinet, an appointment with the Iraqi Legation in Paris.[30] The more irreconcilable Communists had, in the meantime, made themselves increasingly scarce, and for a while went underground

completely. On 19 June, the Reformist ministers, by now well-nigh redundant, and driven to the end of their patience by Ṣidqī's harsh treatment of one of the then endemic tribal rebellions on the mid-Euphrates, finally withdrew from the government. The finishing stroke came on 12 July, when the Association of People's Reform was abolished and its members dispersed.[31] Shortly thereafter, ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʻīl, the most active of the Reformists, set forth on a foreign exile that was to endure for twenty years.

But the regime of the coup d'état, whose advent the Communists had greeted with so much enthusiasm, was–from their point of view–to end its days on a yet more sinister note. On 10 August 1937, one day before the assassination of Bakr Ṣidqī, the regime stripped ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʻīl and his brother Yūsuf of their nationality,[32] thereby bequeathing to its successors a novel and "pernicious" weapon.

Under the uneasy civilian rule that set in on August 17, 1937, Communist work became even more hazardous. The established classes, stirred by the Reformist interlude, were making themselves felt. The police had also grown in experience. As was bound to happen, all but the most persevering of Communists abandoned the field. Leadership passed to the hard-bitten Zakī Khairī.[33]

If anything distinguished Khairī from other Communist leaders in matters of policy, it was the great significance he attached to propaganda in the army. The rank and file, in particular, formed the object of his interest. The officers seemed beyond reach, or not yet ready for the ideas he held. At any rate, he did not seriously attempt to make conversions among them. The 1936 coup had revealed, it is true, how crucially placed were the high and middling commanders in the configuration of state power. But what if at the moment of crisis the men and noncommissioned officers would refuse to go along with their superiors? Surely, in the alienation of the soldiery from the existing order–thought Khairī–lay one of the principal tasks of the revolution.

In an unpublished Communist manuscript entitled *The Iraqi Army* and which, from internal evidence, appears to have been prepared by Zakī Khairī in 1953 for the instruction of the cadre in Kūt prison, an account is given of the beginnings of Communist work in the armed forces. In 1935,

according to this document, “a number of revolutionaries”–for certain Zakī Khairī and Yūsuf Mattī, among others[34]–entered “by some means” a place in Eastern Karrādah–a suburb of Baghdād–where about twenty soldiers and laborers belonging to a secret nationalist organization had gathered and were discussing “with fervor and simplicity” political questions of general import. The soldiers and laborers believed in the method of terrorism. The assassination of the British ambassador and certain of his choice Iraqi clients, they naively thought, would be enough to bring freedom to the people of Iraq. The Communists fell to arguing with them. The destruction of individuals, they explained, would never accomplish the object they had in view. The smitten individuals could always be replaced. They were face to face with a system, they added, and the point was to attack and overthrow it. The correct method lay in organizing the people and preparing them for all forms of revolutionary struggle.[35]

The soldiers, who were thus won over, undertook and proceeded to form cells in the Communications Battalion[36] to which they belonged, and which was then stationed at the Quarantine in Baghdād. In due course the cells multiplied and found their way to the Second Army Division at Kirkūk and near Gawūrpāghī.[37] The movement picked up strength, particularly in the months after the 1936 coup. At that time a special Communist military committee was set up and entrusted with responsibility for agitation in the army.[38] The committee obtained its instructions and reported on its progress to Zakī Khairī and his closest supporter, Yūsuf Mattī, who throughout acted entirely on their own. In the wake of the assassination of Bakr Ṣidqī in August 1937 and the ensuing discontent among the Kurdish troops-Ṣidqī was a Kurd by origin–the movement grew further. In this promising direction, Khairī, himself a half-Kurd and now unchallenged in the underground, threw all the energies left in an otherwise declining party. By November 1937, when the police finally succeeded in getting on its track, the movement had attracted, according to an internal Communist source,[39] no fewer than four hundred soldiers and noncommissioned officers. The authorities, however, arrested only sixty-five men, and ultimately penalized twenty-two of them. Three of the military organizers, Sergeants ‘Ālī ‘Āmer, ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān Dāūd, and Ḍāhī Fajr–were condemned to death. Their sentence was subsequently commuted to fourteen years of prison on the intercession of the nationalist leader Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman. The other

soldiers received terms varying from three to ten years. The leading spirit of the entire enterprise, Zakī Khairī, got away with two and a half years. His principal civilian assistants–Yūsuf Mattī and Ḥasan ʻAbbās al-Karbās–were condemned to the same term.[40]

With the shattering blow dealt to Zakī Khairī's organization, communism in Baghdād seemed once again dead. All its prominent votaries had disappeared. Yūsuf Ismāʻīl settled in Paris and in time joined the French Communist party. His companion, Nūrī Rūfā'īl, left Iraq on 19 November 1937, one day after the arrest of Zakī Khairī, and ended up in Spain with the International Brigade, serving as a sergeant-major at an observation post in the Catalonian front, and ultimately earning the certificate of "activist."[41] Earlier, on 6 October 1937, Mahdī Hāshim was deprived of his citizenship and deported to Iran, where he entered the service of Tūdeh. The other Communist leaders of Baghdād languished in Iraq's unwholesome prisons, or had drifted into remunerative occupations.

Meanwhile, the nationalist tide was in full flow, and in the next few years–1938 to 1941, when the Four Colonels[42] became the arbiters of power in Baghdād–was to sweep every local force before it. This was also the period when fascism became the popular amusement of the student class and of youth generally.

But the tendency to communism, it would appear, was ineradicable. Cropped off in one place, it cropped up in another. In the fall of 1937, shortly before the uncovering of Khairī's organization, a southern Communist by the name of ʻAbdallah Masʻūd enrolled in the Baghdād School of Law, and there on his own, and quite independently of Khairī, began forming the cells that eventually restored the movement to life.

ʻAbdallah Masʻūd,[43] whom we would find at the head of the little band of Communists in the stormy months of April-May 1941, when Iraq bad defiance to England, was born to a religious Shīʻī family in the village of Gardalān in the Shaṭṭ-al-ʻArab "in the year the local mosque was built," that is, in 1911. He received his first instruction at the *Kuttāb*, the Qur'ān school. From his father, who was a *qāri'–a* professional reader–he early learned to recite religious poetry, and when he was a little older and while still a student at the elementary school at al-ʻAshār, the town nearest his village, he was to be found on the appropriate days of the year at Shīʻī

gatherings mourning in sad verses the martyred Ḥusain. It must have been no slight change of mental environment for young Mas‘ūd when in 1929, owing to the lack of means for his support as a boarder at Baṣrah, he was sent to the American Mission School at al-‘Ashār. But he had, it seems, remarkable powers of self-adaptation. He had scarcely been a year at the school, say his adversaries, when in order to find favor with Van Ess, the director, he wrote a brochure in which he sang the praises of Christ. This may be no more than malicious slander, but it is a certainty that all he came in for at the Mission School did not excite him as much as a prohibited little book, which he read in 1935 when he was a teacher at al-‘Ashar, and which the leader of the Baṣrah Communist circle, Ghālī Zuwayyid,[44] had left in his hands. The book was Niqūlā al-Ḥaddād's *Al-Ishtirākiyyah* (Socialism). The author, a Lebanese writer and novelist, presented reasoned arguments against private property, and predicted with assurance a socialist future for the world, but readily dismissed the method of revolution as "a menace to human society."[45] His inspiration came more from the Fabians and Henry George than from Marx and Lenin. The book was not, however, without its uses in a period when the Communists had hardly a literature of their own. For Mas‘ūd, at least, most of the contentions of the author were quite unlike anything he had heard or read in the past and their logic subdued him, as it were, at once and, it seems, for good. "The book effected in me a revolution," he was to say later.

When in 1937 Mas‘ūd turned up at Baghdād Law School, he restlessly cast about in and outside the school for people who could be drawn to the ideas he newly acquired, or who could be of use in revolutionary work. At first the going was difficult. Few would have anything to do with communism. The subject was almost unmentionable and could be broached only indirectly. However, before long some of the remnants of Zakī Khairī's organization gravitated toward Mas‘ūd. Moreover, as nationalism grew apace, uneasy Jewish young men began to seek him out. It was only at this point and after more than a decade of Communist history, it should be parenthetically noted, that the Jews first found their way into the movement.

Since neither their limited means nor the unfavorable circumstances then prevalent permitted them to take even faint initiatives, the Communists thought that they could best occupy their time by catching up on their Marxist education. They were pitifully poor in theory, and they knew it.

They threw themselves, therefore, upon such classics as they could obtain from Mackenzie's bookshop or through clandestine channels from Syria and Iran. They literally studied the *World News and Views* and the *Labour Monthly*, and translated into Arabic the more important articles for those of their comrades who could not read them in the original.

The return of Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf from the Soviet Union on 30 January 1938[46] marked an epoch in the life of ʻAbdallah Masʻūd's group. No one in the group knew how to link theory to practice or, more concretely, to apply the Marxist conceptions to Iraq's peculiar conditions. There was simply no trained or experienced man around to whom the members could turn for confident guidance. Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf was eventually to fill that role.

ʻAbdallah Masʻūd still remembers a phrase that Yūsuf uttered when he first met him early in 1938 at the house of his friend, the Iraqi poet Ḥāfiḍh al-Khuṣaibī. "Even though we are Communists," said Yūsuf, "we do not want to realize communism now; we cannot force the hand of history." This is a well-known Marxist proposition, but at that time Masʻūd found the remark very striking.

At first, Yūsuf, whose party name in 1938 was "Saʻīd" ("The Happy One"), was seldom near at hand. For months on end he would be away[47] and Masʻūd could not reach him. However, when in December 1940 Masʻūd's group felt strong enough to launch the party organ *Ash-Sharārah* ("The Spark"), Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf hurried to Baghdād, made pertinent criticisms, and demanded that the paper be handed over to him. Masʻūd demurred but promised, if Yūsuf would settle in Baghdād, to refer to him for advice and to pay him out of party funds a monthly stipend of 4 dīnārs (£4). Yūsuf agreed, and thus became a member of the self-constituted leading body which now took on a title it had heretofore been too diffident to assume–that of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Apart from Masʻūd and Yūsuf, the committee came to consist of Wadīʻ Ṭalyah, George Yūsuf Sattū–both converts of Zakī Khairī[48]–and of Naʻīm Ṭuwayyeq and Ḥusain Ṭaha (consult Table 16-1.).

The party did not have at that time any printing facilities. *Ash-Sharārah* was produced with a stenciling machine belonging to the government. ʻAbd-ul-Karīm ʻAbd-uj-Jabbār aṣ-Ṣaffar, supervisor of the Typewriters' Division of the Directorate General of Land Registry, performed this task every month without fail until 1942, when the party acquired a machine of

its own. The circulation of *Ash-Sharārah* was no more than 90 in the first month,[49] but approached 300 in the next few months, and in 1942 touched 2,000[50]–which in Iraq is scarcely a trifling achievement.

Ash-Sharārah differed a great deal from *Kifāḥ-ush-Sha'b*, the first official organ of the party. *Kifāḥ-ush-Sha'b* wore, so to say, the mark of youth upon it. Its atmosphere was one of fervor, intransigence, revolution. Its ideals were thoroughly out of keeping with realities, and the tasks with which it saddled Communist devotees were impossible of achievement. By contrast, *Ash-Sharārah* was almost innocent of revolutionary passion. It expressed its opinions, on the whole, with measure and restraint. It emphasized more transitional than ultimate ends. For its watchwords it turned not to the Communist Manifesto but to the Qur'an[51] and to 'Alī ibn Abī Talib, the fourth caliph of Islam. And it showed more solicitude for the Constitution of the country than the government itself ever did.

TABLE 16-1

Central Committee of the Communist Party (January -29 October 1941)

Name	*Nation*	*Religion or sect*	*Date of birth*	*Place of birth*	*Profession*
Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf[a]	(See Table 14-2)				
'Abdallah Mas'ūd[a,b]	Arab	Shī'ī	1911	Ardalān[c]	Ex-elementary schoolteacher; law student; subsequently lawyer
Wadī' Ṭalyah[e]	Arabized Chaldean	Christian	1913	Baghdād[f]	Ex-oil worker; petty clerk at private garage
George Yūsuf Sattū[e]	Arabized Chaldean	Christian	1912	Baghdād	Employee of the railways
Na'īm Ṭuwayyeq	Jew		1909	Baghdād	Translator, *Az-Zamān* newspaper
Ḥusain Ṭaha[i]	Arab	Sunnī	1917	Baghdād	Employee of Survey Department

Education	Class origin	Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement	Prior political activity	Subsequent history
American School at al-'Ashār; Law School	Lower middle class; son of a *qāri'* of Ḥusaini lamentations[d]	1935 (24)	Member of National party	Arrested October 1941; reassumed membership of Central Committee on his release; broke with Fahd November 1942; member of al-Ittiḥād al-Waṭanī party 1946
Elementary (Chaldean School, Baghdād)	Lower middle class; son of a poor grocer.	1934 (21)	–	Broke with Fahd November 1942; member of factional Unity of the Struggle 1943; member of ash-Sha'b party, 1946
Secondary	Peasant class; son of a peasant	1934 (22)	–	Left party 1943; after July Revolution writer in *Ṣawt-il-Aḥrār*[g]
Secondary (Alliance Israelite)	Middle class; son of a merchant[h]	1937 (28)	–	Left party 1945
Elementary	Middle class; son of a real estate owner	1941 (25)	–	Left party 1948

[a]Nominally Mas'ūd was the secretary, but he looked to Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf for guidance.

[b]A disciple of Ghālī Zuwayyid, for whom see Table 14-2.

[c]In province of Baṣrah.

[d]*Qāri'* = reciter of verses lamenting Ḥusain, grandson of Prophet.

[e]A disciple of Zakī Khairī, for whom see Table 14-2.

[f]His family originated, however, from Tal Kayf, a village in Mosul province.

[g]A leftist newspaper.

[h]The father of Ṭuwayyeq, it should perhaps be noted, remarried and the latter was brought up by his uncles.

[i]Coopted after January 1941.

Source: 'Abdallah Mas'ūd and Wadī Ṭalyah in conversations with this writer, and Iraqi Police File No. 31/43 entitled "Case of 'Abdallah Mas'ūd."

But we shall need to understand more particularly the Communist policies as echoed by *Ash-Sharārah*, and for this it is necessary to bring into view the Iraqi movement of April-May 1941 that bears the name of Rashīd 'Ālī al-Gailānī.

The 1941 movement had two distinct aspects. From an international standpoint, it was no more than a peripheral incident in the Second World War, with a purely fortuitous pro-German coloring. Viewed, however, in the

context of Iraqi internal history, it was an important phase in a long process of struggle, a continuation in another form and by other social forces of the 1920 uprising. Now pan-Arab middle-class army officers, and not the localistically inclined tribal *shaikhs* and *sayyids* as in 1920, were the chief motive force; but the principal immediate aim was the same: the elimination of British influence from Iraq.

One could say that, by reason of their international perspective, the attitude of the Communists toward the world war governed their attitude toward the 1941 movement. But, surely, this is a bit of an oversimplification, for while Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf and ʻAbdallah Masʻūd and their companions had, in more than a superficial sense, become Communist, they had not ceased to be Iraqis.[52] Moreover, the links between the Iraqi party and Communist parties abroad were still only crudely developed, and the Iraqi leadership had not as yet been internationally recognized, so that coordination of policies was still somewhat difficult of attainment.

As is commonly known, the Second World War falls, from a Communist point of view, into two qualitatively different periods. Prior to the German invasion of the USSR, that is, from 1939 to June 22, 1941, the war was purely and simply "an imperialist war" of the classical type, that is, a war for the redivision of colonies and zones of influence; thereafter–and to its consummation in 1945–it became, at least as far as the Soviet Union was concerned, "a war of liberation."

As long as the "imperialist" phase of the war lasted, the Iraqi Communists stood for neutrality. For a more elaborate formulation of their policy in that period, it is sufficient to refer to an official party statement published in February 1941. "The Iraqi Communist Party," the statement read,

> appeals to all compatriots regardless of their class ties or political inclinations . . . to strive for the formation of a united national front which would agree. . .
>
> (1) to maintain the neutrality of Iraq in the present war;
>
> (2) to forbid the transformation of our country into a battlefield for the armies of the belligerents;

(3) to work for the conclusion of an Arab alliance for collective defence and the preservation of the neutrality of the Arab countries–an alliance which would be "clean" . . . and buttressed by Arab cooperation on the popular level and through Arab plebeian organizations;
(4) . . . to establish commercial relations with all states with a view to extricating our country from the economic crisis into which it has fallen in consequence of our special connections with certain powers . . . [53]

The party still adhered to this policy when, on April 1, 1941, the famed Four Colonels[54] marched troops on Baghdād, installed the neutralist Rashīd ʻĀlī as premier, and precipitated the flight and eventually the deposition of the pro-British Regent ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh.

These events, which mark the beginning of the 1941 movement, created unusual excitement, which undoubtedly communicated itself to at least some of the members of the party. The leadership realized that the popular enthusiasm for the new regime was genuine and spontaneous. Nonetheless, at first it was cautious and wary in its attitude. However, on May 3, the morning after the outbreak of the "Thirty-Days' War" between Britain and Iraq–a war into which the Four Colonels had helplessly, and almost inexorably, drifted, the party issued a special handbill calling upon the people to rally round the regime and give it unstinting support. The handbill appears to have been prepared and distributed in the absence of Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf, who on being apprised of its content, took exception. The support offered, he felt, should not have been unqualified.[55] As a result, on May 7 the party addressed the following private letter to Rashīd ʻĀlī:

To His Excellency, the Esteemed Prime Minister Rashīd Ālī al-Gailānī:

The Iraqi Communist Party congratulates your Excellency on the affection and backing you have won among the people . . . and fully appreciates how difficult is the responsibility you bear in this critical stage of our history. . . . If it has been unable to express its sympathetic sentiments in a legal manner, it has not neglected to use other means, and in its well-known handbill perhaps preceded others in upholding the movement and acquainting the people with its real meaning. In

thus lending its support, the Party was not acting casually or haphazardly, but in accordance with scientific standards derived from the revolutionary teachings of Marx and Lenin. . . . These teachings will also be our guide in assessing any turn which the movement may take in the future. . . .

The Party believes–and has made this quite plain in . . . *Ash-Sharārah*– in the necessity of exclusively relying on the power of the people who should, for that end, be allowed to enjoy without diminution all their constitutional rights. To rely on a force other than that of the people or proceed in a manner inconsistent with their aspirations would be inexpiable treason. On this basis and in such spirit and driven by its sense of national duty, the Communist Party feels called upon to present to your Excellency its opinion in regard to certain matters . . . which are prejudicial to the national movement.

In the first place, the Communist Party regrets, nay abhors, the acts of provocation hatched against our Jewish brethren by the retainers of British imperialism on the one side, and the propagandists of German imperialism on the other. The violation of liberties, the intrusion into homes, the plundering of possessions, the beating and even murder of people are, your Excellency, acts which not only contravene law and justice but run counter to this nation's natural disposition for generosity, gallantry, and high-mindedness. . . . Such criminal acts injure the reputation of the national movement and lead to a fissure in the ranks of the united national front and hence to failure and who could benefit from this but the imperialists? While thus expressing our disapproval, we do not in the least deny the existence of traiors who belong to the Jewish sect and who have made common cause with the wicked band of ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh and Nurī as-Saʻīd and their henchmen but we feel that punishment should be meted out to them according to the provisions of the law.

Secondly, we are of the opinion that in regard to propaganda, the directorate concerned should orient the Iraqi people along proper nationalist lines but we have observed not without distress . . . that it has deviated into paths which could only bring harm to the people. . . . Lately we have heard only drummings about the "just cause" of the

Axis powers . . . and you, no doubt, agree with us, your Excellency, that the powers in question are no less imperialist than Britain.

Thirdly, there is the matter of foreign assistance. Your repeated statements on the immunity of the national movement from any foreign blemish have been reassuring. . . . To depend on the help of any imperialist state is tantamount to a betrayal of the movement and a lapse into another imperialism and this is surely what your Excellency does not desire. . . . We are dwelling on this point in view of the widely spread report, attributed to a responsible source, that foreign troops will arrive in the capital allegedly in order to defend the independence of Iraq side by side with the brave Iraqi army. If, contrary to what we hope, this is true, then our national movement has been sullied and become part of the Second Imperialist War, a war from which we warned the country to hold aloof. . . . Moreover, we asserted in the past and we now assert once again that the only state on which we could depend without the slightest risk to our national sovereignty is the Soviet Union. We believe that your Excellency shares this view. Some might erroneously contend that assistance by the Soviet Union would entail the advance of Communism in this country but it is enough to point out that the Soviet Union helped Turkey and Iran in their wars of independence and both countries remain uncommunized. Besides, Communism is not a parcel that one could carry from one state to another, but a mass movement which springs from the conditions of economic production and distribution in the first place.

Another question . . . is that of the political prisoners. . . . We regret that your compassion has not so far extended to the courageous Communist soldiers on whom sentences were passed in 1938. . . .

. . . We would also like to repeat our previous appeals as to the necessity of combatting the high cost of living.

In conclusion, we have deemed it advisable to express our views in a private letter to your Excellency rather than in an open statement to the public in order to give you the opportunity to work calmly in the interest of the national movement but we shall not hesitate to publicize these views . . . if we detect any deviation from the aims of the movement as determined by our Party. We support a person only in

measure as he benefits the people for in serving the people, and the people alone, lies our mission.

7 May, 1941 The Communist Party of Iraq[56]

Rashīd ʻĀlī responded by freeing the Communist soldiers who had been rounded up in 1937 and had belonged to Zakī Khairī's organization. His government would not spurn the hand held out by the party when it nursed the hope of obtaining material aid from the Soviet Union. It was for that purpose that it had suggested to the Soviets on May 3 the immediate establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.[57] Its eyes were, to be sure, fixed on Germany in the first place, but its need for friends, wherever they could be found and irrespective of their ideological complexion, was great and urgent. Moreover, from the point of view of supply of arms, the Soviet Union was geographically the closest to Iraq.[58]

On May 12 the USSR extended the desired recognition. The customary notes were exchanged at Ankara four days later.[59] *Pravda*, which had heretofore simply reproduced in brief versions Western and German news reports on Iraq without comment, now remarked that the happenings in that country "graphically illustrate the unenviable lot of small countries which are looked upon by both warring camps as regular or occasional bridgeheads, no regard whatever being shown to the will and wishes of the peoples inhabiting them."[60] This guardedly sympathetic observation–the only such Soviet observation on record–was made, it will be noted, fifteen days after the Iraqi Communist party had pledged its support to the Rashīd ʻĀlī government. When it is further taken into account that the connections between the Iraqi party and the Communists abroad were not at this point regularized, it becomes difficult to maintain, as one writer did,[61] that "the Iraqi Communist stand reflected the Soviet attitude," Moreover, if–as another writer has suggested[62]–Soviet recognition was primarily intended to placate the German government, the letter of May 7 from the Iraqi Communist party to Rashīd ʻĀIī, which has just been quoted, was anything but friendly to that government. Obviously, facile equations between Soviet conduct and local Communist behavior are misleading. We are not in the presence of a mathematical relationship permitting *a priori* determinations.

The idea of turning to the Soviet Union for aid originated with an Iraqi who at more than one point, as we shall see, entered into the plans of the

Communists without ever emerging from his own and who, if only on this account, is entitled to a niche in these pages. I have in mind Yūnis as-Sab‘āwī.

As-Sab‘āwī, a man of a restless and active mind, who was born to a vegetable seller in the city of Mosul around 1906, belonged to the leading nucleus of the 1941 movement and, at least in his inflexible devotion to its ideals, represented it far more genuinely than Rashīd ‘Ālī. The latter was at bottom a politician of the traditional kind, and with a marked spirit of accommodation to the demands of the moment. Like as-Sab‘āwī and the Four Colonels, he was a pan-Arab, but never in a sharp or passionate manner. Though less pliable when it came to British influence, he was nonetheless capable of shutting his eyes even in this connection, if it were politically necessary. But Rashīd ‘Ālī’s elasticity apart, it is clear that his links with the Four Colonels did not antedate March 1940, so that his presence a year later at the very height of the movement was an accident. It merely suited the army officers and their principal mentor, the mufti of Jerusalem, to have him–an ex-prime minister–in that spot. It does not follow, of course, that his role was largely decorative, but it would be a mistake to so present the events of 1941 as to suggest that he was the pivot around which the movement revolved. A balanced picture would show him more as the chief spokesman than the chief initiator of policy in the critical months of April and May of that year. It would also bring out in sharper relief the part played by Yūnis as-Sab‘āwī.

No civilian, not even the mufti, was more akin in thought and feeling to the pan-Arab army officers than as-Sab‘āwī. The reason is not far to seek. A link had been forged between him and Ṣalāḥ-id-Dīn as-Ṣabbāgh, the most prominent of the Four Colonels, as early as 1929, when the nucleus of the pan-Arab military group that eventually achieved political dominance came into being.[63] In the following years as-Sab‘āwī deepened his connections in the army. This and the fiery nationalist views he propagated whenever opportunity offered perhaps explain the remark that Nūrī as-Sa‘īd is reported to have made, when in exile in Cairo in 1936, to Muwaffaq al-Alūsī, one-time Saudi Arabian ambassador to Rome. “This man,” said Nūrī referring to as-Sab‘āwī, “will one day turn Iraq upside down!”[64] From 1936 to 1939, however, as-Sab‘āwī threw himself into more modest undertakings. With the connivance of at least Colonel aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, he

organized the smuggling of arms and ammunition out of Iraq's military depots and into the hands of Arab fighters in Palestine.[65] The climax of his troubled career came with his meteoric rise to the membership of the secret Committee of Seven[66] which in the months of April and May of 1941 guided the destinies of Iraq.

At this point the inscrutable figure of Qāsim Ḥasan, a former leading member of the Association Against Imperialism and a founder of the Iraqi Communist party,[67] loomed in the background. Ḥasan was more than a mere acquaintance to as-Sab'āwī. Both had studied at the Damascus School of Law.[68] Both had admired and worked for *Al-Ahālī*. In 1936, when as-Sab'āwī was engaged in gun-running, he discovered that Communists associated with Ḥasan had a working smuggling apparatus. Ḥasan turned out, therefore, to be the very man he needed. Thereafter for many months he and Ḥasan worked hand in glove. With the help of Nāḍhim Ḥamīd, the deputy director of customs at ar-Ramādī,[69] they conducted their illicit cargoes across the frontier beyond Ruṭah without any trouble. From there Fū'ād Naṣṣār, then a leader of Arab guerillas and a secret intermediary between Communists and nationalists, and presently the First Secretary of the Jordanian Communist party, took charge, and by one means or another managed to carry the arms into the Palestinian localities to which they were destined.[70]

These common exploits gave Fū'ād Naṣṣār and Qāsim Ḥasan a point of contact with as-Sab'āwī, and an influence upon his thoughts. The latter, of course, never developed any leftist leanings but became convinced that the leftists generally could be depended upon in the nationalist regime's life-and-death struggle with Britain. Significantly enough, in the critical last days of May, when the merchants held up grain and extreme scarcity of food threatened, as-Sab'āwī placed leftists in charge of all the *'alāwis*– the granaries–of Baghdād.[71] In a word, during the "Rashīd 'Ālī period" the Iraqi left enjoyed a certain degree of influence at the highest level.

When the question of obtaining arms from the Soviet Union arose, as-Sab'āwī naturally thought of his old friend Qāsim Ḥasan, and suggested sending him to Moscow with the necessary instructions. The Communist party got wind of this through Nāṣir al-Gailānī, one of its supporters and a cousin of the prime minister. It sent word to the government that Qāsim Ḥasan had long since severed his connections with the Communist

movement and that the party was prepared to despatch to Moscow one of its own members–it had in mind Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf–who would be more likely to achieve results.[72]

For the moment nothing followed. The government's political demarches were not keeping pace with developments in the battlefield. Hardly ten days after Iraq and the Soviet Union exchanged their letters of recognition, that is, by the fourth week of May, it was already apparent that the 1941 movement was heading infallibly towards shipwreck.

But even after everything was over and as-Sabʻāwī himself lay in exile in Teheran, his spirit badly bruised, he could still warm himself with the hope that the cause was not yet lost. The people, he believed, were in their overwhelming numbers on the side of the nationalist movement which, in challenging the English, had simply given expression to feelings that for long stirred in their hearts. If proof for this were needed, it was amply provided, he thought, by the furious mass outbreaks that gripped Baghdād on June 1 and 2, close upon the collapse of the nationalist regime. The grave, breath-taking events of the past months had no doubt brought the people to a pitch of dangerous passion. Rebellion had entered deeply into their minds and they were now ripe for any action; only the appropriate means were lacking. These were the optimistic conclusions that as-Sabʻāwī reached, and which early in June he set before the Soviet embassy in the Iranian capital, making them the ground for his appeal for aid from the USSR. The 1941 movement, he hastened to assure the Soviet officials, was "a patriotic movement directed against the imperialists" and had "no connection with Nazism." If arms were made available by the USSR in sufficient quantity, a popular rebellion could easily be started. As-Sabʻāwī also pressed for the recognition of the Rashīd ʻĀlī government-in-exile as the legal government of Iraq.[73] The Soviets reacted a week later by expressing their readiness to receive an Iraqi delegation in Moscow to discuss the matter further. Qāsim Ḥasan, who had followed as-Sabʻāwī to Teheran and had attended the meeting at the Soviet embassy, now left for Moscow by way of Pahlevi and Baku. He arrived in the Soviet capital on June 15, and met with a high-ranking Arabic-speaking official of the Narkomindel. The latter and his secretary, an Orientalist by the name of Ivan Ivanovich Kozlov, promised to give the Iraqi proposal a most sympathetic consideration. In the meantime, in Iran, as-Sabʻāwī,

accompanied by his confederate, Colonel aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, set out for Zenjān, a small town midway between Teheran and Tabrīz, from which they expected to be led across the borders into the USSR. However, shortly after their arrival at Zenjān, the German armies marched on the Soviet Union, thereby altering political relationships completely.

Qāsim Ḥasan was to remain on Soviet territory until late 1944. What he did in the interval is not altogether certain. According to his own account,[74] he lived for a while in a boarding house on Gorky Street in Moscow at the expense of the Soviet authorities, then was moved to Novosibirsk and eventually to Ufa, the capital of the Bashkir Autonomous Republic, to which–as is known–the headquarters of the Comintern had been transferred from Moscow in the autumn of 1941. He himself, however, professed ignorance of this fact, and with no less emphasis denied having attended the Comintern school which, until its dissolution in 1943, was located in the village of Kushnarenkovo, forty miles to the northwest of Ufa. From the outset, he maintained, the Soviets were very reserved with him. They afforded him hospitality[75] but at the same time kept him under observation. He attributed their distrust to an unfavorable report forwarded in the mid-thirties by Zakī Khairī[76] to Khālid Bakdāsh, secretary general of the Syrian Communist party, and which he suspected to be in their possession. As a matter of fact, in 1935 an internal party circular warned revolutionaries that Qāsim Ḥasan was "a traitor and a spy" who had insinuated himself into the confidence of the Communists only to betray them to the police.[77] British Intelligence, however, was no less mistrustful of Qāsim Ḥasan, as can be seen from the following communication which the British "technical adviser" sent to Iraq's chief of political police on May 29, 1945, some time after Ḥasan's return from Russia:

> This man was flown from Moscow to Teheran in a Russian plane. Russians don't do that for a person who is a "nobody" or not likely to be useful to them. Immediately on arrival in Teheran he contacted the British and said he had important information and wanted to work for them. They said "Oh yes: thank you, you'd better contact our people in Baghdād if you feel that way." So far, however, he has not contacted CICI or any British organization. This is, of course, a very common

Russian way of doing things and it seems quite obvious that Master Qāsim Ḥasan has come here to work for them.[78]

What precisely happened afterwards is not known. All that could be said with certainty is that in late 1945 Qāsim Ḥasan became the legal agent of the Imperial Chemical Industries, a position that he maintained till 1958. In 1946 he also joined the ranks of the National Democrats and rose quickly to the Secretariat of their party. After the 1958 Revolution, he served General ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim in the capacity of Iraq's ambassador, first to New Delhi and then to Prague. Subsequent to the Baʻthī coup of February 1963, he became associated with the American Interstruct Corporation–seemingly a financial concern with headquarters in Vienna. All this while the Communist accusation that he was "a tool of the imperialists" had not been laid to rest.

The strange career of Qāsim Ḥasan has carried us far ahead of our account, and we must now retrace our steps to the Baghdād of June 1941. The defeat of the nationalists in that month had brought with it a dismay more overwhelming than any that had yet fallen upon the capital since the collapse of the 1920 uprising. In this atmosphere, and in the light of the crucial events that had come crowding on–the British re-occupation of the country, the return of Regent ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh, the German invasion of the Soviet Union, and the shift in power relationships–the Communists were making something in the nature of a reappraisal of their policies. The party had come under heavy fire, mainly from Jewish members whose passions were no doubt aroused by the loss of several hundred Jewish lives in the mass outbreaks of June 1 and 2. The party, they charged, had mixed itself with men whose association with the Nazis was an abundant advertisement of their dubious character. The critics, the party leadership retorted, were riddled with Trotskyism. Lenin himself had said that the interest of the revolution required at times that responsibility for it be left even in the hands of reactionaries, "for the force of the patriotic movement could push its leaders–reactionaries though they be–to continue in its service." Throwing the responsibility on them was like throwing a rope around their necks which would tighten in measure as they inclined to break faith with the revolution. The Rashīd ʻĀlī government was not, to be sure, above

reproach. By withholding from the people their constitutional right to organize themselves in parties and trade unions, it took the heart out of the national movement. You cannot grapple with the mightiest empire in the world by ignoring the power of the masses. Did this not leave the rear of the army unprotected and allow the agents of the enemy to range about without hindrance? Was it really wiser to count on the help of the Nazis? Indeed, for its blunders the Rashīd ʻĀlī government merited the verdict of treason. But the defects of the leaders in no way detracted from the "immaculacy" of the 1941 movement and the unalloyed popular enthusiasm that it had called forth. The policy that the party had pursued was, therefore, prudent and appropriate.[79] Within two years, however, the Communists would have cause to change their mind. "Our support of the Rashīd ʻĀlī movement, though not unqualified, was a political mistake," they would admit with reluctance.[80] By the time of the First Party Conference (March 1944), Fahd, the secretary general, would be disdainfully dismissing the movement as a "foolhardy venture,"[81] and a decade later the principal organ of the party would denounce it as "fascist" and "criminal."[82]

The Communists could not in June 1941 radically alter their appraisal of the nationalist movement without giving affront to popular sentiment, or even risking ostracism. But it was not purely a matter of sensitivity to local realities. Many of the Communists were themselves not unaffected by the wave of bitterness that swept through the nation.

PART III

CAUSES

17

OF THE GENERAL CAUSES THAT MADE FOR THE INCREASE OF COMMUNISM IN THE TWO DECADES BEFORE THE JULY REVOLUTION

In the forties communism became a factor in the life of Iraq. It did not implant itself in the visible citadels of power but in the hearts and minds of youth. In terms of continuity, organization, and number of supporters and sympathizers, it rose to first rank among political movements.[1] "Its doctrines," wrote Bahjat ʻAṭiyyah, the chief of the political police, in April 1949, "spread so widely in the big towns . . . that by the last days of the Party nearly fifty per cent of the youthful elements of all classes had been carried away by them. . . . It even found its way into the prisons which for a time took much the aspect of institutions of Communist learning. . . ."[2] ʻAṭiyyah's men had some months before broken up all the important organizations of the party: hence the unduly confident reference to its "last days." In 1935, upon grounds no less solid, his predecessor reached an identical conclusion; and in four and ten years the Baʻth would be falling into the same mistake.

Far from dying out, communism became in the fifties a more powerful passion, its ideas evoking feelings akin to faith, and assuming with many of the youth the force of being beyond argument. Its rhetoric, its mood, its style of thinking affected even its opponents. In the last years of the monarchy, the right-wing Independence party, though quite devoid of the Marxist ethos, spoke and grumbled in a Marxist way. In 1951, when the public had not yet learned to distinguish "socialism" from "communism," the one-time Prime Minister Ṣāliḥ Jabr christened his party, which was anchored on landowners and semifeudal tribal shaikhs, the Socialist Party of the Nation: he was only one of many who in that decade wrapped themselves with the cloak of socialism in the hope of borrowing a little of

its popularity. A glance at the present declarations of the Ba‘th or at the speeches of ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, or even of the out-and-out Moslem ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref would be enough to realize that communism had provided a whole generation of Iraqis with not a few of their categories of thought.

Many factors prepared the soil on which communism recurrently grew. Perhaps the most basic was the little affection or loyalty that the existing institutions inspired in wide strata of the people. In the sixties many Iraqis would look back nostalgically to the epoch of the monarchy, but under the monarchy many more felt that they could not be worse governed than they were. Coups or outbursts of national or local significance characterized, in fact, almost the entire life span of the monarchy–the period 1921-1958 (see Table 17-1). However, in certain of its aspects this restlessness or instability was not a special feature of the monarchy, but a chronic condition of Iraq. It was, indeed, more acute and injurious in the nineteenth and earlier centuries, and had its roots in one all-encompassing social fact: Iraq was–and to a lesser degree remains–a country of many different tribes, sects, and races, with many different opinions, impulses, and passions. More specifically, this instability was a natural result of the indecisiveness–till well into this century–of the long-drawn-out twofold conflict between the small areas of permanent settlement–the riverine cities–and the mobile or semimobile tribesmen of the surrounding plains and mountains over food-producing or cultivable regions, on the one hand; and between the chief riverine city, Baghdād, and the independence-minded lesser towns and townlets, on the other. One consequence of this state of Affairs is of special importance from the point of view of our study: the government at Baghdād, the traditional breaker of tribes and town-states, was long regarded as an enemy. Moreover, in Baghdād itself, the rulers were by and large disconnected from those upon whom they exercised their will, less by reason of their foreign–Georgian Mamlūk or Turkish–origin than because they were prone to be arbitrary and violent, and in general insensitive of the feelings of their subjects. To the lowly, who were seldom tended and almost always shorn, government–any government–became something against which one had to shelter himself, an object of distrust and hatred. The Sunnī character of the government, which rendered it a usurpation in the eyes of the Shī‘ī majority, turned popular enmity into an act of faith. Escape from

government–as from scorching heat–led at Najaf to the development of an underground town; part of this city is in the very bowels of the earth; every old house in it has subterranean chambers, sometimes three or four stories deep, and connected by passages with those of other houses, so that a person can move from one end of the old city to the other without being seen–a condition obviously affording limitless opportunities for underground movements. Briefly, then, opposition to government became with most Iraqis a matter of instinct, so to say, and continued to manifest itself even after the threads tying them to their tribal or belief-group snapped or wore thin. The saying of the Arab poet:

TABLE 17-1

Uprisings, Coups, and "Revolutions," etc. Iraq since the British Occupation

Year	*Uprisings, etc. of national significance*	*Local uprisings*
1919		Kurdish uprising under Shaikh Maḥmūd
1920	*Ath-Thawrah* against the British	
1924		Kurdish uprising under Shaikh Maḥmūd
1927		Kurdish uprising under Shaikh Maḥmūd
1930		Kurdish uprising under Shaikh Maḥmūd
1931		Kurdish uprising under Shaikh Aḥmad of Barzān
1931	14-day general strike	
1933		Rebellion of the Assyrians
1935		Rebellion of the Yazīdīs
1935		Rebellion of shaikh of Barzān
1935		Rebellion of mid-Euphrates tribesmen
1936		Rebellion of mid-Euphrates tribesmen
1936	Bakr Ṣidqī military coup	
1937		Tribal rebellion in Dīwāniyyah
1937	Military counter-coup	
1941	"Rashīd 'Ālī" coup	
1943		Kurdish rebellion under Mulla Muṣṭafa of Barzān
1945		Kurdish rebellion under Mulla Muṣṭafa of Barzān
1947		Rising of the peasants of 'Arbat (a Kurdish village to the southeast of Sulaimāniyyah) against their landlord, ash-Shaikh Laṭīf, son of Shaikh Maḥmūd
1948	*al-Wathbah* (mass urban uprising against the monarchic government, but much in the nature of a mass hunger revolt)	
1952		Rise of the peasant-tribesmen of al-Azairij against their overlords in the province of 'Amārah
1952	*al-Intifāḍah* (a *Wathbah* of lesser proportions)	
1953		Rise of the peasant-tribesmen of Diza'i in the province of Arbīl

1953		Rise of the peasants of Warmāwah subdistrict in the Sulaimāniyyah province
1953		Rise of the peasants of Hūrain Shaikhān subdistrict in the Diyālah province
1954		Rise of the peasants of Shāmiyyah in mid-Euphrates
1955		Rise of the peasants of Banī Zuraij at Rumaithah in Dīwāniyyah province
1956		Rise of the town of al-Hayy in Kūt against Shaikhs Āl Yasīn
1956	*Intifāḍah* (occasioned by the Tripartite Attack on Egypt)	
1958 (April)		Rise of the peasants in the regions Daghārah-Rumaithah in Dīwāniyyah province
1958 (July)	*Ath-Thawrah*	
1959	Abortive Shawwāf coup in Mosul	
1961-1975	Kurdish revolt under Mulla Muṣṭafa of Barzān	
1963 (Feb.)	Ba'thī coup	
1963 (Nov.)	Coup under 'Abd-us-Salām 'Āref	
1964	Abortive Ba'thī coup	
1965	First abortive coup by 'Āref 'Ābd-ur-Razzāq	
1966	Second abortive coup by 'Āref 'Ābd-ur-Razzāq	
1968 (July 17)	Ba'thī–'Abd-ur-Razzāq Nāyef coup	
1968 (July 30)	Ba'thī coup	

Half the people are enemies
to the holder of power and this if he is just

applies with special force to Iraqis. We can now make the point at which we have been aiming: communism, insofar as it is a powerful ideological battering ram against existing authority, accords with a sentiment by which Iraqis are animated and which reaches very deep. This must certainly be accounted as one factor in its remarkable progress in the forties and fifties.

If in certain respects the restlessness that marked the period of the monarchy was an old fact corresponding to conditions that stretched into the distant past, in other respects it was quite novel and without analogy in Iraqi history. The tribal rebellions of the first decades of the monarchy–and more so the Arab than the Kurdish rebellions–appear in retrospect as the

gasps of a tribal world approaching its end. The rural rebellions of the last decade of the monarchy were of an entirely different character. They were rebellions not under shaikhs but against them (take another look at Table 17-1), and were made by tribesmen whose customary ideas and norms of life had been shaken to their foundation. In consequence of the progress of imperialist influence in the latter part of the nineteenth century, the linking of Iraq to the world economy, the deepening of this link after the British occupation, the introduction in the 1870s of the *ṭapu* semi-private property, and in 1932 of the analogous *lazmah* system, the permanent settlement of the tribes, the usurpation by the shaikhs of the communal tribal domain, and the conversion of the land from the self-sufficient to the market-oriented economy–in consequence of all these factors, the old, patriarchal, life-furthering relationship which once tied the tribesmen to their shaikh had given way to an overlord-quasi-serf relationship which chained them to distress and privation, and the idea now sank into them that this was not an unalterable state of things. The idea was, of course, spread by Communists and in certain instances by National Democrats,[3] but it was the change in their social conditions in the first place that made them accept it.

The restlessness in the towns also underwent a qualitative transformation in the period of the monarchy. To speak of the towns is to all effective purposes to speak of Baghdād, to which, with the decline of the tribal world, the political center of gravity had definitively and decisively shifted, and which in the space of a few decades absorbed unto itself much of the vitality of the entire country. Baghdād, it must be said at once, had known much unrest in premonarchic times. It experienced sudden changes, as in 1831, when the reign of the Georgian Mamlūks came to an abrupt end; mass demonstrations, as the one engineered in 1869 by the town magnates against the too efficient Turkish governor Midḥat Pasha; food riots, as in 1877, when famine threatened. But all these disturbances had limited or strictly political aims. The early unrest under the monarchy partook of the same character. The general strike of 1931 had little object but the defeat of an unpopular municipal taxation law and the toppling of an unpopular Cabinet. The military coup of 1936, as that of 1937 or of 1941 did nothing more than exchange one government with another. But in the late forties and fifties outbursts bore a ḥitherto unfamiliar stamp. The discontent, up to then political, now became social. It was no longer directed in the first place

at a particular Cabinet, or at the manner of government, but at the order of society. In the rise of this new kind of consciousness it is not difficult to discern the influence of communism. But things must be ascribed not to their proximate but to their ultimate causes–the life conditions that made for the outbursts, no less than for susceptibility to the type of consciousness that the Communists promoted.

At the root of the problem lay deep-reaching urban structural unbalances.[4] Their presence can be inferred from the effects that they had upon the livelihood of the mass of the inhabitants of Baghdād. As is plain enough from Table 17-2, there was a direct relationship between the cost of living and the uprisings of the last decade of the monarchy. The official price-of-food index, based on the requirements of unskilled labor, reached its record peak at 805 points (1939 = 100) in 1948, the year of the *Wathbah*.[5] It dropped to a low 599 in 1949, and lower to 548 in 1950, but from this level it moved up, attaining another peak at 665 in 1952, the year of the *Intifāḍah*.[6] After falling and rising again, it headed toward still another peak in the year before the July Revolution. The general cost-of-living index followed a similar trend. The inflationary pressure at work had its origins in the circumstances that attended the Second World War. The conflagration brought in the British military forces, who set in hand many constructional works, and were for a time spending at a rate nearly three times that of the Iraqi budget and capital works' expenditure combined.[7] The increasing money supply (consult Table 17-3) was accompanied not only by the fall of imported consumer goods to between half and one-third of the prewar volume, but also by heavy British purchases of Iraq's grain. Once begun, the inflation fed upon itself, and profiteering and speculation carried it to higher levels. Goods continued in short supply for a number of years after the war, and cereals were exported in increasing quantities without regard to the consumption requirements of a growing urban population:[8] in the twelve months before the *Wathbah*, when the city poor were already seriously short of bread, 298,829 metric tons of grain, pulses, and flour were exported;[9] and in the year before the 1952 *Intifadah*, 529,734 tons[10]–an increase of 81 percent over the 1939 figure.[11] No commensurate rise in grain production appears to have taken place.[12] But the real factor making for inflation from 1952 on was the oil boom, or more accurately, the great flow of money that, as a result, was infused into the Iraqi economy.

TABLE 17-2

Popular Uprisings in the Forties and Fifties and the Cost of Living Index for Unskilled Laborers in Baghdād City

(Base year 1939 = 100)

Year	Popular uprisings	Monthly average	
		Foodstuffs index	General index number[a]
1939		100	100
1945		655	590
1946		628	566
1947		689	601
1948[b]	*al-Wathbah*	805	673
1949		599	540
1950		548	491
1951		581	523
1952[c]	*Intifāḍah*	665	564
1953		560	490
1954		549	480
1955		573	495
1956[d]	*Intifāḍah*	616	527
1957		651	554

[a]Covers foodstuffs, clothing, fuel, light, rent, and other items.

[b]Year of Portsmouth Anglo-Iraqi Treaty.

[c]Year of Egyptian Revolution.

[d]Year of the Tripartite attack on Egypt.

Source: for Indices: Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1956* and *1957*, pp. 158 and 152, respectively.

TABLE 17-3

Private Deposits in Banks, Currency in Circulation and Wholesale Prices (1939–1958)

(in millions of dīnārs)
1 dīnār = £ 1

	Private deposits[a]		Index bank deposits	Currency in circulation	Index	Wholesale prices index
	in banks	with ṣarrāfs[b]				
March 1939[1]	2.0	c	100	4.7	100	100
March 1943[1]	9.0	c	450	26.2	557	590
January 1948[2]	18.3	c	915	33.7	717	612
November 1952[3]	15.8[d]	c	790	29.9	636	498
June 1958[4]	47.7	1.4	2,385	53.5	1,138	433

[a]1939, 1943, and 1948 figures for government deposits are not available. Those for 1952 and 1958 were 17 and 18 million dīnārs, respectively.

[b]*Ṣarrāf* = money changer.

[c]Not available.

[d]It would appear that the migration of the Jewish community in 1949–1951 was accompanied by a migration of capital from Iraq.

Sources:

[1]Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1943*, pp. 181–184.

[2]*Statistical Abstract 1949*, pp. 262–263 and 291.

[3]*Statistical Abstract 1953*, pp. 160–162 and 255.

[4]*Statistical Abstract 1959*, pp. 92, 305, and 307.

These conditions profoundly disturbed the existing distribution of incomes and fortunes. While the peasants, who in their greater part were still outside the money economy, were not directly affected, the numerous class of unskilled city laborers suffered very severely. Their wages lagged far behind prices. In the terrible year 1948–the year of the *Wathbah*– their average daily earnings were only about 400 percent above the 1939 level, whereas the price of their food was 805 percent higher (see Tables 6–14 and 17–2). A calculation made in 1953 showed that a bare subsistence wage for a worker with a wife and two children was about 330 fils a day.[13] But in that year the Baghdād general rates for unskilled labor ranged from “less than” 200 to 250 fils a day (see Table 6-14). In 1954, when the cost of living dropped slightly from the level at which it stood in 1953 (see Table 17-2), a budget enquiry, conducted by the government, deduced that the average daily income of wage earners living in Baghdād’s *ṣarīfas* was 188 fils, and that of the more fortunate wage earners living in the city’s built-up areas, 310 fils.[14] After due allowance for a certain amount of understatement of incomes, for sampling errors, and other statistical deficiencies, there is no escape from the conclusion that great numbers of unskilled city laborers fared palpably worse in the forties and first half of the fifties than in 1939.

A number of factors worked unerringly to their disfavor. In the first place, they always abounded or, to speak in the inhuman language of economics, they were never a scarce commodity. The large-scale movement of people to Baghdād from all parts of the country–the population of the capital more than doubled between 1922 and 1947, and rose by half as much between 1947 and 1957 (see Table 2-2)-and especially the steady stream of peasant-tribesmen which saddled Baghdād with innumerable *ṣarīfas* and mud houses,[15] greatly intensified their struggle for life. The closing of workshops at the end of the war by the mammoth employer of labor–the British military forces[16]–added frightfully to their woes. The *de facto* denial of their right to combine for mutual protection–except for a very brief period in the middle forties–placed them completely at the mercy of men of capital.

No less sadly disturbed in their daily lives were those sections of the middle class who were bound to fixed money earnings, such as the civil servants, the teachers, the clerks of commercial houses, and the salaried writers and journalists. As shown in Table 17-4, the pay, including high-cost-of-living allowance, of the lowest and most numerous classes of the civil service–classes III and IV–had risen by the time of the *Wathbah* of January 1948 to 54–140 percent and by the time of the *Intifāḍah* of November 1952 to 86–280 percent above the 1939 level, while the index of wholesale prices (see Table 17-3), comparing with base year 1939 at 100, stood in 1948 at 612 and in 1952 at 498 points. Notwithstanding substantial salary increases in 1956, the bulk of the civil servants had not by the July Revolution reattained their prewar standard of living.[17] This is no less true of the army officers, even though the latter enjoyed privileges such as servant and housing allowances, and quick promotions (see Table 41-1). In a sense–and this applies more truly to the forties–the lower middle class was worse off than the unskilled laborers, an undoubted effect of its inferior capacity to endure hardships.

TABLE 17-4

Pay of Civil Service (Including Teachers) in 1939, 1948, 1952, and 1958 in dīnārsa

Scales of monthly pay, including high-cost-of-living allowance of officials who were married and had more than one child, or were widowers and had more than two children[b]

Class	Pay in 1939	Pay in January 1948[c]	Increase	Pay in November 1952[d]	Increase over 1939	Class in 1958	Pay in July 1958[e]	Increase over 1939
Distinguished	–	–	–	115	–	I	160-180	
I	45-70	60-94	33%-34%	67-100	44%-43%	II	120-145	
II	30-40	44-55	47%-38%	51/500-61/500	72%-54%	III	90-110	
III	15-25	27-38/500[f]	80%-54%	33-46/500	120%-86%	IV	67/500-85	
IV	5-12	12-23/500	140%-96%	19-29	280%-142%	V	43-62/500	187%-150% (compared with Class III in 1939)
						VI	23-39	360%-225% (compared with Class IV in 1939)

[a]1 dīnār = 1,000 fils = £ 1.

[b]In other words, these are the maximum scales for the classes indicated. The singles or widowers, or the married without children or with one child, or the widowers with one or two children received, of course, a smaller pay.

[c]The month and year of the *Wathbah*.

[d]The month and year of the *Intifāḍah*.

[e]The month and year of the Revolution.

[f]I.e., 38 dīnārs and 500 fils.

Sources: For 1939, Civil Service Law No. 64 of 1939 in *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah* (Iraqi Official Gazette) No. 1753 of 18 November 1939. For January 1948, High Cost of Living Allowance Law No. 16 of 1942, adopted on 11 April 1942 and published in *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah* No. 2016 of 14 April 1942, as amended by Law No. 52 of 1942 *(Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah* No. 2061 of 24 November 1942), and Second Amendment Law No. 2 of 1944 *(Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah* No. 2153 of 26 January 1944). This latter law was superseded only on 19 July 1948, i.e., six months after the *Wathbah*, by Ordinance No. 9 of 1948; see *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah* No. 3641 of 21 July 1948. However, an emergency ordinance (No. 2 of [21 April] 1948, increased all allowances by 50% for a period of three months; see *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah* No. 2603 of 24 April 1948. For the November 1952 figures, Law Amending Civil Service Law No. 1 of 1952 in *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah* No. 3061 of 6 February 1952, and High Cost of Living Allowance No. 9 of July) 1948, which remained in force until superseded by Ordinance No. 3 of (March) 1954. For the July 1958 figures, Civil Service Law No. 55 of 1956 in Supplement to *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāaqiyyah* No. 3804 of 12 June 1956.

While the greater number of people led a precarious existence, at the other end of the social scale, a thin layer–landowners, merchants, speculators, politicians, and others–was visibly enriching itself. Private deposits in banks rose from 2.0 million dīnārs[18] in March 1939 to 18.3 million dīnārs in January 1948, that is, 815 percent, and to 47.7 million dīnārs in June 1958, that is, 2,285 percent. These figures and corresponding data on the currency in circulation, when considered in conjunction with the movement of wholesale prices[19] and in the light of the impoverishment of the laboring and salaried middle classes, inescapably point not only to a gross maldistribution of the benefits deriving from the oil wealth of the country, but also to a transfer of real income from the many to the few, at

least in the period between 1939 and 1948. We get an inkling of how part of this transfer took place from letters intercepted by the British political police and written in 1943– when the process was still in its initial stages– by Munawwer al-Hāshimī to her husband Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, an ex-minister of defence, who had incurred the displeasure of the regent and was in exile in Isṭanbūl.

> It is unfair [wrote Mrs. Al-Hāshimī] to remain in Isṭanbūl after receiving the permission. Please come without losing time. The contrary advice you receive are from people who do not want you to come here, being afraid that when one day you become a minister you will be an obstacle in the way of their stealing. Rats are multiplying so quickly that the number of cats is not sufficient. . . . People who used to ride in oxen drawn carts formerly are now driving automobiles with their pockets full of playing cards. Those who dislike your coming are such kind of people. Amongst them are plenty of friends and relatives. . . .
>
> . . . My dear, life is very expensive. The dīnār has dropped to the rate of one fils.[20] . . . Even the cucumber costs 300 fils. . . . Printed chintz sell at 250 fils the local yard . . . , you can guess the pitiful state. . . . I asked Aḥmad Shawqī whether the government would take any preventive measures. . . . He replied: "We have no right whatever to interfere because trade is free and everyone may sell his goods at the rates he desires." I am wondering why such ignoramuses remain in the towns.[21]

Actually, half-hearted and largely ineffective price controls were introduced in 1943 but abandoned late in 1944.

The new wealth, by lifting the few, who benefited from it, high above the bulk of the people, and by engendering luxury amidst distress, stiffened the psychological barriers between the classes and endangered the structure of society. The rich increasingly took thought for themselves alone and they and the rest of Iraqis could no longer see eye-to-eye on basic issues.

This was the fundamental historic setting in which Communist feelings grew. But there were other contributory factors. One of these was the inability of the injured classes to better their conditions or redress their grievances in a legal manner. The laborers and the salaried middle class

were, of course, excluded from political power. The narrow circle of rulers that rested essentially on an alliance of bureaucrat- *mallāks,* ex-Sharīfian officers turned *mallāks, shaikh-mal lāks,* and moneyed interests, had grown accustomed to regard the other classes as immature and not deserving of political rights. From the disbanding of the People's Reformists in 1937 till 1946, no parties were permitted to function. After that, under popular pressure, freedom of political activity was hesitantly conceded, but was so circumscribed in practice that–except for very brief and intermittent periods–it amounted to no more than a fiction, until finally prohibited by ordinance in 1954. Similarly, from the quashing of trade unions in 1933, the combination of workmen for economic ends was seldom viewed with indulgence. The Labor Law of 1936 did pay lip service to the rights of labor, and in 1944–1945 the rulers, in a tolerant mood, legalized several unions, but, apparently feeling that they had only opened a Pandora's box, quickly put the lid on them. One further experimentation with unions in 1951–1952 ended in the same way.[22] Except in the years mentioned, pressing for a higher wage or for fewer working hours or for a strike was equivalent to political disloyalty, and often meant loss of livelihood. All these circumstances made for a radicalization of the popular will, and tangibly strengthened the hand of the Communists. Since the existing distribution of the goods and powers of life did not favor the bulk of the people–a socially objective fact which became magnified when reflected on the level of social consciousness–and since no change compatible with current and incessantly mounting desires could be brought about by legal action, and as some form of action was unavoidable, the underground–the by now natural habitat of Iraqi Communists–came into its own. The road of social reform was barred: for the discontented there remained only the alternative of social revolution. By social reform is meant here the reform of the basic structure of society. The understandable lack of interest on the part of the rulers in such type of reform did not, of course, preclude advances in certain areas of life-such as education (see Table 17-5)–advances which were bound sooner or later to undermine vested social interests. The reader will surely be able also to distinguish between social reform and economic progress, which was certainly taking place. The whole point at issue was that, in the existing social context, economic

progress–for the time being and apart from its long-run effect–redounded disproportionately to the benefit of a minority.

One other factor that added to the chances of communism, and which flowed logically from the situation just described, was the huge political void beneath the edifice of power. To put this differently, below that edifice moved a mass hostile to what was above it, but affirmatively uncommitted, and with unsatisfied needs and unverbalized demands, and with ranks ripe for organization. The field was, in an effective sense, clear for the Communists. In other Arab countries they had to contend with strong rivals–the Ba‘th in Syria, the Syrian National party and the Phalanges in Lebanon, and the Wafd and Moslem Brothers in Egypt. There was nothing comparable to these forces in Iraq. The National Democrats, the heirs of *Al -Ahālī* group, could have perhaps qualified, had there been a genuine and continuous party life. The Iraqi Ba‘thists were late comers and did not become of account until after 1958. Up to then, as it happened, the Communists alone had the true characteristics of an organized political party and, in an unqualified sense, alone could claim the advantages that a high degree of continuity bestows. They also had been on the scene earlier than any of the other forces, antedating, as they did, even *Al-Ahālī* group, as already noted.

TABLE 17-5

Number of Students in Colleges and Secondary and Vocational Schools in Selected Years

	1921, year of founding of monarchy	*1927, year of first student demonstration*	*1948, year of* Wathbah	*1952, year of* Intifāḍah	*1958, year of Revolution*
Colleges	99	77	4,212	4,851	8,568
Educational missions	9	24	180	125	859
Secondary schools					
a) Government	229	1,086	14,745	29,941	73,911
b) Nongovernment	*	*	8,302	10,626	24,672
Industrial schools	167	148	296	491	2,339
Agricultural schools	–	–	150	80	1,236
Primary rural teachers' training schools and educational courses	92	387	1,798	1,391	10,994
Health officials' and nursing schools	–	–	50	264	347
Home arts schools	–	–	113	236	2,528
Fine arts institute	–	–	253	243	204
Total	596	1,722	28,099	48,248	135,658
Rough Proportion of Students in Baghdād	*	64%	54%	48%	45%

*Figures not available

Sources: Iraq, Ministry of Education, *At-Taqrīr-us-Sanawī 'An Sayr-il~Ma'ārif* ("Annual Report on the Progress of Education") for 1955–56, pp. 54, 57, 61, 68, 69, 75, 95, 175, and 176; for 1922–23, p. 16; and for 1927–28, pp. 11 and 14–16; Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1949*, p. 69; *Statistical Abstract 1953*, pp. 60–61; and Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Abstract 1959*, pp. 65, 66, 67, 70, and 73.

This superiority of position is not unconnected with the fate that overtook the pan-Arab nationalists after the collapse of the military movement of 1941. Prior to this event, the nationalists had been on the upgrade. Indeed, between 1937 and 1941 they had the whole political field to themselves. State power came then under their influence, and mass processes moved in their direction. But their aspirations exceeded their capabilities and brought them into a headlong collision with the English. As could be expected, nothing went well with them after that. In the wake of the English reconquest of Iraq, which followed, a campaign of repression was let loose upon them. Their central nucleus, the Muthanna Club, and the youth organizations–the Jawwāl and Futuwwah–which they had set on foot, were quickly broken up. Their press was shut down. Their followers were hunted and driven out of the army, the administration, and the schools, and some three hundred of them were herded into concentration camps at Fao, 'Amārah, and Nuqrat as-Salmān.[23] But these physical blows scarcely explain the dissipation of much of their influence. Their real problem was

that they had only political formulas and no thought-out views. Their slogan of pan-Arabism struck deep chords, but they were unable to impregnate it with a social content. More than that, they got caught on the hook of fascist propaganda and when fascism, which was for a while in fashion, fell into bad odor, they were psychologically left out at heels.

This, of course, significantly changed the balance of local forces and helped in no small measure the progress of the Communists–a consummation not altogether undesired at the time by the Iraqi government and its British advisers. “Close upon Britain’s alliance with Russia in the world war,” wrote Bahjat Aṭiyyah, the chief of the political police, in a 1946 confidential report, “police measures against the Communists were relaxed. This was felt to be necessary under the circumstances . . . : the Communists were regarded as a sort of ’sixth column’ in the struggle against Nazi propaganda.”[24] In Pursuance of this policy, an official directive (No. S/6/415) was issued on April 22, 1943, prohibiting the courts of law from hearing cases involving Communists without prior permission from the Ministry of Justice. It did not follow that the harassment of Communists ceased entirely.[25] The policy was flexible and pursued in the sense indicated by the momentary interests of the government. This attitude of qualified tolerance, which was abandoned in 1946, finds typical expression in the following comments of the British adviser to Bahjat Aṭiyyah on the application for a license presented by the Communist-oriented People’s party of ‘*Aziz* Sharif:

> I do not think that the fact that any particular signatory is not rich, or that others do not come from a well known family, or is not otherwise well known has anything to do with the question of their suitability to form a political party. . . . One is reported to have been arrested for “communism”:[26] is that a disqualification? There are many others who also have been so arrested but against whom it would be difficult to allege that they are otherwise unworthy citizens. . . . If subsequently it proves that any of the signatories of the party misbehaves the remedy is in the hands of the government-shut it down.[27]

The effects of this transient policy and of the more enduring internal circumstances already referred to tended to be reinforced by the course of international events. Undoubtedly, the rise of the Soviet Union in the world, the successes of its armies in the war, the victory of communism in China, and the Russian exploits in space did much for the prestige of Iraqi Communists in the minds of the people. From this standpoint, however, the international behavior of the Soviet state was not always helpful. The Soviet attitude towards the Palestine problem, for example, severely damaged the chances of the Communists in 1948–1949. On the other hand, the Soviet support of the Arab national movement in 1955–1957 appreciably contributed to their swift recovery. These are facts that are widely known and need no further elaboration.

Thus far in this chapter, only the more concrete conditions to which the growth of communism corresponded have been pointed out. But other influences of a less tangible nature were also at work. There was, to begin with, an unassuaged thirst for ideals. The elements directly affected were, of course, the youth of Iraq, and especially its students. The Islamic (Shī‘ī or Sunnī, Ṣūfī" or orthodox) ideas, which had for long been the mainstay of the people, were in a state of progressive decomposition. At least as then formulated and interpreted, they were out of accord with the needs, desires, and life experience of an ever-widening number of socially conscious Iraqis. Islam, to be sure, still preserved its impressive outward front, but in reality had lost much of its life-furthering power. Nationalism was in a crisis, in effect at an ebb and formed, at any rate, no substitute. Some of its in-sufficiences have been already mentioned. One or two general points need, however, to be stressed. Nationalism, whether of the pan-Arab or particularist variety, appealed, it is clear, to the heart and had little to offer to the mind. It consisted of sentiments, memories, and an excess of rhetoric. Its preoccupations were essentially political: independence; unity. It was strongly oriented toward a romanticized past, and only feebly conscious of the actual conditions and wants of the mass of Iraqis. We are speaking, it must be remembered, of pre-Ba‘thī nationalism,[28] that is, of a nationalism that had not yet borrowed theoretical–and organizational–weapons from the armories of Marxism. If the reformist ideas of *Al-Ahālī group* and of the National Democrats were more developed, they nonetheless bore the impress of unfinished-ness, and lacked a distinct philosophical basis.

Moreover, by reason of the propensity of the governing class to monopolize political activities, these ideas seemed destined to perpetual frustration.

Not unrelated to this state of things was another element: the students–and the intelligentsia in general–were, so to say, intellectually disarmed. For one thing, their fund of ideas was extremely meager; for another, they lacked the habit of disciplined thinking. In part this was simply one facet of the underdeveloped condition of the society. To a degree the trouble related directly to the tendency in schools and colleges toward learning by rote. But it was also explained by the fact that the government feared thought. In an Iraqi context, thought–of the more serious kind–was essentially unsettling. To think meant to raise questions that would have involved, sooner or later, probing into the foundations of society and a rejection of much of what existed, things being what they were. Naturally enough, the government did not merely clamp down at will on open manifestations of independent thought, but never introduced political philosophy or anything directly bearing on politics into the school or college programs. The result was ironic but perfectly congruent: in times of suppression–which were frequent–the Communist underground enjoyed a nearmonopoly in the propagation of theory.

The inherent vigor of Marxist theory is not a matter in dispute. To discuss its virtues or its imperfections is beyond the scope of this study. One point must, however, be brought out. In the Iraqi environment, Marxist theory, with all its shortcomings, was, at least in its trenchant class criticism, relevant. It translated, even if in an exaggerated direction–and exaggeration engenders strength in an emotionally charged climate–what the Iraqi now persistently sensed around him: the crude class reality of Iraq. Iraqi class differences, it must be remembered, are bare and brusque, and have none of the subtlety or gradation that in other societies serve to disguise their reality or mitigate their effects. The impact of the theory, particularly on minds that lived on ancient ideas–ideas that assumed that poverty and wealth were something fated, unalterable features of life–can be imagined. An Iraqi of a religious family, who was brought up according to the traditional Shī‘ī precepts and became a member of the Politbureau of the Communist party in the forties, recalled in a conversation with this writer how when reading a forbidden book he first came across the idea that the distinctions between men were not God-given but were due to human and historical causes, the

idea was to him “something like a revelation.” There was nothing in his previous experience to suggest anything different. He had taken for granted the Qur’ānic injunction: “And as to the means of livelihood we have preferred some of you to others.”[29]

It remains to refer to one other conjunction of circumstances that facilitated the spread of Communist ideas: all the classes principally affected–the students, the unskilled laborers, the *ṣarīfa-d* wellers, and the civil servants–were not only growing in numbers at a rapid pace, but tended also to be concentrated to a high degree in a geographical and occupational sense. Thus the number of students in colleges and secondary and vocational schools increased from some 2,000 in 1927, the year of the first student demonstration, to 28,099 in 1948, the year of the *Wathbah*, and 135,658 in 1958, the year of the Revolution. In 1948 around 54 percent and in 1958 around 45 percent of these students were enrolled in the educational institutions located in Greater Baghdād. [30] Similarly, the number of industrial and transport workers in enterprises employing 100 or more rose from 13,140 in 1926 to 62,519 in 1954, that is, 375 percent.[31] Of all industrial workers in 1954, 33.1 percent were employed in Greater Baghdād and 17.4 percent in Baṣrah province.[32] Moreover, in that year large-scale industry (that is, establishments employing over 100 men) accounted for 43.5 percent of all industrial laborers.[33] The *ṣarīfa*-dwellers of Greater Baghdād, for their part, numbered no fewer than 92,173 in 1956, and 56 percent of them were grouped in the Karrādah and ‘Aḍhamiyyah centers.[34] Finally, government officials–excluding foreign personnel, employees of the port and the railways, and Iraqi *mustakhdims*, that is, holders of non-pensionable appointments–increased from 9,740 in 1938 to 20,031 in 1958, that is, 106 percent.[35] They were, of course, largely centered in the capital.

The explanation for the advance of communism in the two decades prior to the July Revolution has not been really exhausted, for we have not yet spoken of the important role of Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf–Fahd–a subject that must now occupy our attention.

PART IV

FAHD AND THE PARTY (1941–1949)

18

FAHD

Fahd succeeded where many had failed. From the founding of the party in 1935 to the year 1941, the efforts of the Communists recurrently lapsed into individualism, disaccord, and spinelessness. Between 1941 and 1947, however, Fahd turned the party into a compact and effective political force and built a mass base of support and belief. The greater possibilities of communism were, of course, to be inferred from the social, economic, and political circumstances of the forties,[1] but the leadership of Fahd was by no means a minor element in endowing the possibilities with real life. The significance of this leadership becomes the more obvious in the light of the difficulty of joining Iraqis in any sustained common endeavor.

However, it must be added at once that Fahd's leadership was not in the forties something extraneous to the Communist movement, a mechanical addition to it, so to say. On the contrary, Fahd himself was to a large extent its product: he had been by degrees selected, prepared, and tested out during the previous two decades, that is, since 1927, when he united with others to form in the city of Baṣrah the first Communist circle in Iraq.

But what distinctive individual traits did Fahd bring to bear? As could be expected, his personality is surrounded with controversy. His followers invest him with imaginary virtues, his enemies with imaginary faults. There is, however, enough evidence–his writings, his actions, his depositions to the police or in courts of law, the impressions and testimony of the more reliable of his contemporaries–to enable us to form an idea, albeit incomplete.

Externally, there was nothing out of the common about Fahd. Indeed with casual acquaintances, he was apt to leave the impression of inconsequence. In the few non-Communist gatherings at which he is known to have been present, he tended to keep a quiet distance of his own. If he talked at all, he

talked briefly. Even when he was alone with his followers, he would often sit for hours without uttering a word.[2] He simply detested long and formless discussions and would have nothing to do with what he called “coffeehouse Communists.” But devotees or liberal politicians, who had had tête-à-tête conversations with him, say that when it came to interpreting a point of doctrine or a line of policy, he could be less chary of words. Once–after his arrest in 1947 –Bahjat ‘Aṭiyyah, the chief of the political police, had to interrupt him and protest that he didn’t care to embrace communism. “Fahd had strong powers of persuasion and the gift of explaining things in a clear and simple manner,” ‘Aṭiyyah later[3] told this writer. He did not, however, possess a very broad culture, ‘Aṭiyyah added. Many of Fahd’s erstwhile companions share this view.[4] Nonetheless–if his writings are any proof–he appears to have grasped better than any other Iraqi Communist the ideas of Marx and Lenin–the result, evidently, of sheer effort and application.

In the view of Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, the leader of the National Democratic party, “Fahd showed confidence in himself to the point of presumption.”[5] Communists, who could collaborate with Fahd only for a brief period, also complained of his unalterable conviction that he alone could lead the party. His excessive faith in himself, however, while repelling politicians and political intellectuals, inspired the humbler people with whom he had his most active relations.

While Fahd could on occasions show flexibility,[6] on the whole he did not know how to meet people halfway. This in Iraq is probably more of a social than an individual phenomenon. At any rate, it hindered the realization of fronts with other forces, when, from the point of view of the Communist party, such fronts were absolutely indispensable.

One other quality of Fahd that perhaps is as much an expression of the Iraqi as of the Bolshevik temperament is the fierce bitterness with which he resented opposition. In the recriminations that normally followed, he was prone to go to extreme lengths. In a letter to the Syrian Communist leader Wasfī al-Bunnī, Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb, who was ousted by Fahd from the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist party in August 1942, complained that, “the Communists in Iraq look upon me and my companions as “spies” and “Nazis” while the “Nazis” and the police look upon us as Communists. . . . It is easier for a Nazi and a Communist to agree than for two Communists to work hand in hand.”[7] Earlier, and in connection with the dispute that led

to Ayyūb's expulsion, Fahd saw fit to publish the following letter in the party paper *Ash-Sharārah:*

> Our beloved leader Fahd,
>
> . . . We have been much upset by what happened lately. We await impatiently the orders of our party. We are ready–at a word from you–to cut the necks of the traitors with the teeth of our saws.
>
> A group of carpenters.[8]

In his reply, Fahd did call for a *deeper* understanding of Marxism-Leninism, but that he should publish the letter at all shows to what crude lengths he could go to frighten his opponents.

To such crudity of method cannot be attributed the rigorous discipline that came to mark the party in his days–for in time Fahd gained in discrimination and refinement. The explanation lay rather in his outstanding capacity as an organizer. Even his bitterest rivals admit that he was unsurpassed in the party in the art of grouping and leading men. Anyhow, by the middle forties Fahd succeeded under very difficult conditions in commanding implicit obedience from the entire membership.

However, the real clue to the readiness of the revolutionaries to follow him lay perhaps in the fact that he had faith in his ideal and gave up his life to it. While to others, struggle in the underground was no more than a temporary escape from frustration, an excursion from the boredom that was their life, a means of expression when other outlets were denied to them, to Fahd the underground was his home, his life. All other things–happiness, family, a real home–were canceled for him. The party became the point of his existence. He ceased to care about anything else.

Fahd hardly ever referred to his private life. Asked once–by one of his comrades in the prison of Kūt–about his age, he answered: "My age begins from the day I entered the national movement; the rest is not of my age."[9] In fact, Fahd was born on 19 June 1901 in the city of Baghdād.[10] His family had come a decade or so before from an overcrowded Chaldean village[11] in the province of Mosul. The economic necessity that uprooted it eventually–in Fahd's seventh year–carried it to the town of Baṣrah.

Little is known about Fahd's father, Salmān Yūsuf, apart from the fact that he made a living by selling pastry and sugared cakes. The contentions that he came in his youth "under the influence of socialist ideas,"[12] or that he visited Russia at the beginning of the century and returned "a social democrat with Bolshevik persuasions"[13] are undoubtedly myths.

Fahd's early years are no less obscure. It is clear, however, that he passed his childhood in an environment very much dominated by the norms of the Christian *millah*, the semiautonomous, ideologically self-sufficient Christian community of Ottoman days. It is equally clear that his father spared no sacrifice over his education. In 1908, as Iraq was beginning to feel the effects of the Young Turk Revolution, he sent him to the Syrian Church School at Baṣrah, where he remained until he was thirteen years old. Subsequently, a few months after the outbreak of World War I, which was to bring Iraq a new overlord–the British–and in other respects change the country so profoundly, he enrolled him in the American mission school at al-'Ashshār. In later years, even after Fahd's conversion to communism, it would be possible to tell that he had had a dose of American learning. A placard which he posted on the walls of Nāṣiriyyah on the eve of the 1932 parliamentary elections and in which he called upon the workers to elect deputies from their own class, carried under the emblem of the hammer and sickle the watchword: "No taxation without representation."[14]

There is one circumstance relating to his two years at the American school which is of more than purely external interest. In the class with him sat a boy of the same age[15] but from a prominent landowning family of Qūrnah. They were conscious of each other's presence, but did not mix because Fahd was from too "low" a class to be good company for the Qūrnah boy–as the latter explained long afterwards.[16] The whole rhythm was simply different. In not many decades, however, their lives would be fatefully connected. While Fahd's name would echo and re-echo through every secret gathering in the country, the boy from Qūrnah–Bahjat 'Aṭiyyah–would rise to be the chief of the political police[17] and the bane of revolutionaries. Eventually Fahd would fall into Aṭiyyah's hands and lose his life. Even in his death, however, Fahd would continue–by virtue of the forces that he would have stirred–to exert against Bahjat 'Aṭiyyah a deep-moving influence and would finally help to pull him down to his ruin and destruction. But we are running ahead of our account.

Fahd never finished his studies at the American school, for his father succumbed to illness and the family fell on bad days. It thus became necessary for him to bear his share of the burden. In late 1916 he found employment as a clerk with the British forces that had landed at Baṣrah two years before.[18] In his eyes, no disgrace as yet attached to serving the new imperialist regime. Indeed, the mild Baṣrites generally had been too quick to adapt themselves to its requirements. When, however, in 1919 Fahd moved to the Muntafiq province to help his brother operate a small grain mill in the town of Nāṣiriyyah, he found himself in an entirely different atmosphere.

Rebellion was almost a second nature to the people of the Muntafiq. The inhabitants of no other province in Iraq were as jealous of their freedom, as disdainful of law, or as opposed to any form of government. “The Muntafiq Arabs,” wrote a British political officer in 1919, “can be compared to gunpowder, the slightest spark will set them off.”[19] The explosion came early in the summer of 1920, in conjunction with other other risings on the Euphrates and in Diwāniyyah and Diyālah. In Iraqi annals, these outbreaks are referred to as *ath-Thawrah–the* Revolution. The immediate effect in the Muntafiq was the disappearance of the British from most of the country outside Nāṣiriyyah. Eventually, however, the “Revolution” was put down and the British fetters reimposed.

It is difficult now to recapture the impressions that these stirring events made on young Fahd. Most probably his manner of thought had not as yet been completely freed from the narrow outlook of the *millah*. Besides, Iraqi patriotism was still a young and feeble growth. Nonetheless, Fahd himself later asserted[20] that the *Thawrah* of 1920 had stirred in him the first feeling of love for his country. Communist sources also lay stress upon it as a significant factor in the early stage of his development.[21]

The real turning point in Fahd’s life, however, was his meeting in Baṣrah in 1927 with Pyotr Vasili, a preacher of the revolution. Fahd had returned to that town three years earlier to fill a vacant clerical post at the Electric Supply Authority. The meeting appears to have, been purely fortuitous, but its results were incalculable. Into Fahd’s eager ear Vasili instilled the first principles of communism. These were things–it appears–that he himself had felt, if vaguely, but did not know that they were called communism. Gradually and in the course of the many meetings that followed a new,

animating view of life unfolded before Fahd and he awakened for the first time to his own reality.

Fahd spent the next few years organizing, with other Iraqis, small secret societies in Baṣrah and the Muntafiq. In 1929, however, he suddenly gave up his job at the Electric Supply Authority and applied for a passport to travel abroad for four years as a "globe trotter." His avowed object was to familiarize himself with "the life of the peoples."[22] Questioned as to his means, he said he had none but would earn his living on the way "by selling photographs," His application was denied, but before long he found means to slip away. He crossed and recrossed the Iraqi frontiers several times undetected, traveling on foot through Khūzistān, Kuwait, Transjordan, Syria, and Palestine. The journey proved arduous and trying, and for a time he fell prey to illness.[23] But he did not abandon his plans and intended to push on to Egypt when–according to his own account[24]–news reached him of the conclusion, on June 30, 1930, of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty.[25] He thereupon hurried back home. There was, of course, little that he could do other than urge his thinly spread supporters to join in the National party's campaign of condemnatory speeches, leaflets, and press articles. An opportunity for more effective action came a year later, in July 1931, when a wave of strikes, set off by the introduction of a new municipal tax, hit many of the Iraqi townships. There had been nothing like it in Iraq before. The tense excitement that gripped the country for a whole fortnight made it impossible for Fahd and his followers to lie still.[26] It is perhaps not without significance that in the Muntafiq and in Baṣrah–where the Communists had active centers–the strikes took a violent turn and led to bloody clashes with the police and the grim display of British warships near the estuary of Shaṭṭ al-ʻArab.[27]

At around this time Fahd began to spread his circles to other parts of the south and in particular to Dīwāniyyah and ʻAmārah. Simultaneously, the authorities were learning more about his travels of the previous year. A report from the Palestine political police reaching Iraq in August 1931 told of his endeavors to contact the Comintern through the Palestine Communist party and to obtain funds for the financing of the "cadre" that he intended to form in Iraq.[28] Subsequent information, derived from documents originating at the Oriental Section of the Comintern and seized in Jerusalem in March 1933, indicated that he was "either the medium or the receptacle" of

important interparty correspondence.[29] It also became clear that during his visit to Syria he strengthened the connections established as early as January 1929[30] with the Communists of that country who, according to an intelligence report,[31] operated now openly under the cover of Jam‘iyyat-ul-Wifāq-il ‘Arabī, The Association of Arab Accord.

It was allegedly with the encouragement and financial backing of this association[32] that Fahd set out on 3 February 1935 for Moscow for a course of training at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East, KUTV. He reached the Soviet Union at the latest in July,[33] and remained in that country till the summer of 1937. Of the intervening period, which is of some moment in his life, there is disappointingly little to report. The only account on hand–that of *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, an internal journal of the fifties intended for the guidance of the Communist cadre in the prison of Kūt–is not very revealing:

> From 1935 to 1937 Comrade Fahd underwent training at KUTV. Of the Iraqis who passed through that university none showed greater zest for learning or put to better advantage the knowledge gained. At the end of July and in the first days of August 1935 he attended the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern. The Communist Party of Iraq was at that time still in its infancy and did not, therefore, possess the right to vote. . . . [But the mere watching of the proceedings was in itself an invaluable experience.] . . .
>
> In the summer of 1937 Comrade Fahd and graduates from other countries took their leave from Comrade Kalinin at the seat of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and left farewell letters to their wives freeing them from their marital ties–for the farewell of spouses who dedicate themselves to the selfless service of the Revolution could be eternal–and it was so unfortunately in relation to our immortal Comrade. . . .
>
> Only his complete biography–and no such biography is possible unless the Communist International shares in preparing it–will throw light on the mission he undertook in Western Europe in the autumn and winter of 1937 . . . but it is certain that he lived for a time in France and Belgium as he himself later related to his companions in the prison of Kūt. . . .[34]

Fahd returned to Iraq on 30 January 1938[35] and settled down to repair the havoc wrought among Communists in his absence. He proceeded slowly and with method, and at first confined his efforts entirely to the south, where the movement had had its real birth. Earlier, even while Fahd was preparing himself at KUTV, a police agent foretold of the role he was now about to play. The reorganization of the Communist party, the agent reported on 5 August 1936 "is not expected to take place until after the return from Moscow of an important Communist who led cells in Baṣrah, Nāṣiriyyah, Dīwāniyyah, Baghdād, Kirkūk, ʻAmārah, Kūt, and in other places. . . . The Communist in question is Yūsuf Salmān, an inhabitant of Nāṣiriyyah. . . ."[36]

At Baghdād itself, as noted elsewhere, it was another southern Communist, ʻAbdallah Masʻūd, who took the initiative; but the latter, it will be remembered, had hardly started the party there in earnest when Fahd put in an appearance, and though at first was content with the humble role of a simple member of the Central Committee, he became in time–by virtue of his experience and greater grasp of theory–the real moving spirit of the party. We are now on ground already fully covered. It remains, however, to note that on 29 October 1941, ʻAbdallah Masʻūd was arrested by the police and that, in consequence, Fahd assumed at last the position to which his revolutionary record entitled him, the general secretariat of the party. From this point, the life of Fahd merges completely in the Iraqi Communist movement and becomes indistinguishable from it.

19

TOWARD A TIGHTLY KNIT, IDEOLOGICALLY HOMOGENEOUS PARTY

Fahd's first years as secretary of the party were largely absorbed in forging a solid organization of revolutionaries out of the loose, amateurish, many-willed elements that he had inherited or had himself won over. Initially his efforts led only to splits, purges, and a depletion in party strength. Indeed, at one point and while he was absent in Moscow, the overwhelming majority of the members deserted him, and he had in effect, on his return, to build again from scratch.

In part, the difficulties of Fahd were due to certain characteristics that mark many of the Iraqis of these times, and more particularly the stratum of the intelligentsia: a strong aversion for discipline, a disinclination to act in subordinate roles, an open contempt for authority–in short, an intense individualism that sometimes verges on anarchy.

But Fahd also courted trouble, and defeat for his own ends, when he chose to include in his first Central Committee men who had never before been in the party, and had only very vague notions of communism and underground work. Nor did it help him subsequently that he should have given little thought to the old Central Committee, which found itself all of a sudden unceremoniously displaced. Fahd, however, did retain Wadī Ṭalyah,[1] who recounted years later[2] how the change of leadership took effect:

> About a week after the arrest of ʻAbdallah Masʻūd[3] and his exile to Fao–that is, in early November 1941–Comrade Fahd came to see me and asked me to call later that day at the house of Ṣafā'-ud-Dīn Muṣṭafa[4] in al-ʻAdhamiyyah.[5] When I got there, I found, apart from Comrade Fahd, Dāūd Ṣāyegh, Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb, Amīnah ar-Raḥḥal,

Ṣafā’ud-Dīn Muṣṭafa, and Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī, most of whom had not up to then been connected with the Communist movement.[6] Evidently all had been handpicked by Comrade Fahd, who next opened the meeting with a brief statement from which we gathered that the persons present and the exiled ‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd formed the new Central Committee. When Comrade Fahd ended his remarks, Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb asked him whether he had any mandate from abroad, that is, from the Comintern, to organize a command for the party. Comrade Fahd replied in the affirmative. He did not show us any document but we were satisfied. Thereupon the meeting took a vote confirming him as secretary of the party. I had at that time some misgivings about a Christian leading the organization,[7] but in view of Comrade Fahd’s assurance to Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb I did not voice them and voted along with the rest. . . .

TABLE 19-1

Fahd’s First Central Committee (Early November 1941 to 20 November 1942)

Name	*Nation and religion*	*Date and place of birth*	*Profession*
Members of the Politbureau			
Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf (Fahd)[a]	(See Table 14-2)		
'Abdallah Mas'ūd[b]	(See Table 16-1)		
Ṣafā'u-d-Dīn Muṣṭafa[a]	Arab, Sunnī	1911, Baghdād	Elementary school-teacher and editor of *Al-Qāfilah*
Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī[a]	Arab, Shī'ī	1914, Najaf	Elementary school-teacher
Other members of the Central Committee			
Wadī' Ṭalyah[a]	(See Table 16-1)		
Na'īm Ṭuwayyeq[c]	(See Table 16-1)		
Dāūd Ṣāyegh[a]	Arab, Christian	1907, Mosul	Ex-schoolteacher; lawyer
Zhū Nūn Ayyūb[a]	Arab, Sunnī	1908, Mosul	Secondary school-teacher; novelist
Amīnah ar-Raḥḥāl[a,d] (female)	Turkoman mother, Arab father; Sunnī	1919, Baghdād	Law student
Zakī Basīm[c]	Arab, Sunnī	1913, Baghdād	Ex-learner-worker in a tannery; clerk in Water Department

Education	Class origin	Date (and age) link with earliest Communist movement	Prior political activity	Subsequent history
Intermediate; dramatic art at University of Berlin	Middle class; son of Ottoman army officer	1941 (30)	–	Broke with Fahd 20 November 1942
Secondary; 1 year Law School	Lower middle class; son of a man of religion (*mu'azzī*)	1941 (27)	–	Member of Central Committee till arrest in 1947; hanged 1949
Higher Teachers' Training College; Law School	From a petty-bourgeois family of goldsmiths and men of religion; son of an auctioneer	1941 (34)	Supporter of National party	Member of Central Committee till arrest in May 1943; formed factional League of Iraqi Communists, February 1944; member Central Committee, 1957, expelled same year; founded bogus Communist party in 1960 under General Qāsim
Higher Teachers' Training College	Lower middle class; son of a small merchant	1941 (33)	–	Expelled from party 16 August, 1942, formed factional "Congressists"; director of guidance and broadcasting 1959
Law School	Middle class; daughter of Ottoman army officer	1941 (22)	–	Dropped from Central Committee 1943; Inspectress of Education 1959-1963
Secondary	Lower middle class; son of a pharmacist	1942 (29)	–	Member of Central Committee till arrest in 1947; hanged in 1949

[a]Member of Central Committee as of November 1941.

[b]Assumed position after his release from detention on 27 April 1942.

[c]Coopted to Central Committee early in 1942.

[d]Sister of Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl.

Sources: Conversations with Dāūd Ṣāyegh, Wadī Ṭalyah, and ʻAbdallah Masʻūd and Iraqi Police Files No. 487, 3347, 3436, 31/43, 2/47, 3/47, 4/47, and report of director general of criminal investigations to the minister of interior dated 2 July 1947, in Iraqi Police File No. 487.

Fahd must have had a hint from this meeting that Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb would be giving him trouble. He seemed unprepared to follow Fahd's lead without question. It would have been surprising, indeed, if Fahd had taken his subservience for granted, for Zhū Nūrī was the only member in the new committee who had made some mark in public life. He had won a reputation–and no little popularity–as a novelist and exposer of abuses, and had already written his chief work, *Dr. Ibrahīm*,[8] a scathing attack on current social and political norms.

Nonetheless, in the matter of communism he could learn a great deal from Fahd. Strictly speaking, before the latter crossed his path there was little of that ideology in his writings, except for certain vague and elusive references, even though his sympathy for the poor and the toilers generally was not to be mistaken. Of course, a degree of obliqueness was unavoidable at a time when talk about communism was fraught with risks, but a Communist, even under those conditions, would have written differently. His language was more that of the reformer than of the revolutionary. He could, it is true, be sweeping in his denunciations. But when it came to remedies he seldom went outside the liberal tradition.[9]

The real difficulty, however, did not arise from his antecedent beliefs or the lack of his ideological preparation, but from the fact that he was utterly unfitted for professional revolutionary work. He was overly sensitive, tended to see people and ideas in too sentimental a fashion, and could not bear the constraints of organizational ties. In the underground he was simply out of his element.

What ultimately occasioned the rupture between him and Fahd–and here we are depending on the version put out by *Ash-Sharārah*, the party organ–was his involvement with a faction that began to take shape in June 1942 or thereabouts, when a member of a primary party committee–Ya'qūb Cohen,[10] the son of a well-to-do Jewish merchant and a student at the Medical School–fell to advocating the possibility of realizing socialism in Iraq at the hand of the students, the intelligentsia, and the "petty bourgeoisie" generally. There would be no point to relying on the workers; they were simply too few and lacking in class consciousness, he is said to have maintained. Fearing the spread of what was obviously an ideological heresy, Fahd caused Cohen to be tried in July 1942 before a party court,[11] which took pains to remind him that the task before the party for the time

being was not the bringing about of socialism but of a “bourgeois-democratic” regime. The court also called upon him to retract his “erroneous and sterile” theory and to wade more deeply in the classics.[12] But instead of mending his course, Cohen proceeded to make light of the court’s decision and assailed the party’s leaders in the name of the party’s interests, whereupon Fahd, with the concurrence of “some” of the members of the Central Committee, ordered his expulsion from the party. Cohen was not, however, to be deterred. He now prevailed upon Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb and a number of party organizers[13] to join with him in issuing an unauthorized statement in an attempt to “sow confusion” in the ranks of the party and undermine the authority of its leaders. This was an intolerable manifestation of factionalism. Consequently, on 16 August 1942, a meeting of the Central Committee, hastily summoned by Fahd, decided without a dissenting vote[14] to expel Zhū Nūrī and his “scheming” associates, and to consider them thenceforth as “traitors” and “renegades.”[15]

It is difficult to say whether in this affair Zhū Nūrī actually played second fiddle to a mere member of a primary committee–as suggested in the preceding account–or the facts and sequences were circumstanced by Fahd after his own manner in order to disparage the apparent leader of a fledging rival faction. Be that as it may, when Zhū Nūrī and his followers, who now called themselves “Al-Mu‘tamariyūn”–“The Congress-ists”–published in November 1942 their own organ, *Il-al-Amām* (Forward),[16] they gave a different version of the issues involved. They brushed aside the ideological deviation of Ya‘qūb Cohen. The real source of the conflict, they contended, was the absence of any internal party rules. There existed, for example, no definition of the powers of the secretary, the Politbureau, or the Central Committee, nor were the conditions for admitting or expelling party members known. They had pressed–they said–for a rectification of this state of things, only to meet with the exasperating assertion that the rules of the party “are the principles of Leninism and the history of the Bolshevik party and of Marxism in general.” Clearly, their opponents[17] did not care to give up their “absolute power.” What they wanted was simply a party marked by ready and unthinking obedience. The crisis, “the Congress-ists” concluded, could only be resolved by convoking a congress representing all the Communists of the country. Without a congress there could be no legitimate Central Committee and no valid internal rules, and without internal rules no

party could exist.[18] Hence the holding of a congress would be their principal watchword. Hence also their name–"the Congress-ists."

Fahd's rebuttal did not come until many months later, for in early November 1942, a few days before the appearance of the Congress-ists' *Il-al-Amām*, he left on a party mission to Iran and the Soviet Union. In the meantime, another faction no less hostile to Fahd's leadership reared its head.

The prime mover in the new faction was the ex-secretary of the party, ʻAbdallah Masʻūd ("Comrade Riyāḍ"). The latter, it will be recalled, had been under detention at Fao since October 1941. On April 27, 1942, however, he was suddenly released. At the time, this development seemed somewhat ambiguous, and in not many months was to give rise to broad hints that the authorities had purposely let him loose for the undoing of good Communists. The letter of the minister of interior ordering his release simply referred to "new extenuating circumstances." Perhaps a contributory cause was the severe beating he suffered in the month of March at the hands of what an entry in his police file described as "Nazi" detainees.[19] The explanation that he himself gave to his colleagues on the Central Committee was that he had addressed a petition to the British Embassy in which he protested his loyalty to the "democratic cause," expressed bewilderment at being confined together with "fascists," and solicited an early intervention on his behalf.[20]

Anyhow, ʻAbdallah Masʻūd became Fahd's deputy and a member of the Politbureau. This may have come to him as a disappointment. He had perhaps expected to regain his old position. But he voiced no complaint, and seemed at first to cooperate unreservedly with Fahd. In less than six months, however, Fahd found himself confronting in the Central Committee a solid phalanx composed of Masʻūd himself, Masʻūd's old associate, Wadīʻ Ṭalyah, Naʻīm Ṭuwayyeq[21]–whom Fahd had cast aside but who was reinstated in the spring of 1942 on Masʻūd's insistence–and Ṣafā'u-d-Dīn Muṣṭafa, who had grown to resent Fahd's "peremptory" ways. Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī, Dāūd Ṣāyegh, Amīnah ar-Raḥḥāl, and Zakī Basīm[22]–who was coopted early in 1942–remained loyal to Fahd. But Basīm was at some point given "a special party assignment" and ceased to attend the meetings of the Central Committee; and ash-Shabībī, who taught school in the remote province of ʻAmārah, seldom showed up. When, in the

first week of November 1942, Fahd left Iraq for the USSR, not only was the stimulus of his own presence withdrawn, but a clear majority was assured to his opponents, who now proceeded to capture the entire organization.[23]

Actually, the crisis began three or four days before Fahd's departure, when he called a meeting of the Central Committee and proposed that Wadī Ṭalyah be dropped from that body. He charged him with laziness, incompetence, and indiscipline. His opponents interpreted this move as an attempt on his part to hit them severally, in order the more easily to destroy them. They sprang to the defence of Ṭalyah, and made counter-charges of their own. They accused Fahd of interfering in every cell and primary committee. They deplored his reluctance to adopt a program and rules for the party. Fahd, they heatedly complained, wanted to concentrate and absorb in himself all the forces of the movement. The dispute became sharp and bitter. Two long sittings did not bring the Central Committee anywhere near a decision.

In the third sitting, which was held on November 4, Fahd did not put in an appearance, but sent word by means of Amīnah ar-Raḥḥāl intimating that he would be proceeding on a journey abroad. He also deputed ʻAbdallah Masʻūd to preside over the party in his absence, and urged a comradely resolution of the pending conflict. The message, which, incidentally, shows that Fahd could on occasions be very supple, helped to soothe and allay excited feelings. The brief remarks that an emissary of Tūdeh made as the meeting got under way had the same effect.

The emissary was Mahdī Hāshim, a founder of the Iraqi Communist party, but since 1937 a member of the Iranian organization.[24] He apparently served as a regular link between the two parties, for he had reportedly crossed from Iran to Iraq and back under false names five times in months past, using either the Khāniqin or the Ahwāz–Baṣrah road.[25]

Hāshim had sat through the acrimonious exchanges of the previous two sessions of the Central Committee, and felt it now necessary to bring his personal weight into play. He revealed that he had come in order to accompany Fahd to Iran and from thence to Soviet territory. This was, therefore, no time for quarrels, he added. Only the enemy stood to benefit; the party might be hurt if not imperiled. He ended with an appeal for the composing of differences and the closing of ranks.

The Central Committee entered into his views and, before the meeting drew to a close, unanimously resolved to lay aside all "bickerings" and to condemn factious and disruptive tendencies. It also pronounced itself in favor of convoking a congress for the purpose of electing a representative leadership and drawing up a program and statutes for the party, but agreed to take no action in this regard until after Fahd's return.

Within two weeks, however, ʻAbdallah Masʻūd and his confederates reneged on the resolutions and summoned a congress on their own initiative and without informing the other members of the Central Committee. The congress met on 20 November 1942,[26] and called itself "the Consciousness of the Iraqi Proletariat." The twenty-six "delegates" who attended it hailed from Baṣrah, ʻAmārah, an-Najaf, Kirkūk, and Baghdād, and purported to represent "the no less than one thousand" members of the party. They were, in fact, to a man loyal to Masʻūd's group and, as could be anticipated, elected a central committee that designated Masʻūd as secretary. Five of the eleven members of the committee were drawn from the Jewish component of the party, which had supported Masʻūd from the very beginning. All of Fahd's followers were excluded but, significantly enough, Fahd himself was retained.[27] It was apparently hoped that Fahd would, on his return to Iraq, accept the *fait accompli*.

Although Masʻūd and his committee now took into their hands the party printing press and the party organ *Ash-Sharārah*, and succeeded in commanding overwhelming support among the rank and file, in party annals they cease as of this point to represent the party, and become merely the "New Sharārah faction," "The rule," Fahd would say after his return, "is the subordination of the minority to the majority, but the majority is bound by the Leninist line. Should it swerve from it, it would cease to be a majority entitled to obedience, and would degenerate into a deviation incompatible with the principles of the Comintern."[28]

Admittedly,[29] Fahd's supporters now dwindled to a tiny handful, but–in the eyes of the faithful of later years–remained the visible embodiment of the party and its truest expression. At the time, the section of the Central Committee, which had persisted in its loyalty to Fahd (see Table 19-2), thought of itself also in this light and, in replying to Masʻūd's maneuvers, acted accordingly. On November 24, 1942, that is, four days after the holding of Masʻūd's congress, in a forcefully worded statement it

disavowed the legitimacy of the congress and denounced Mas‘ūd and his group as “saboteurs” and “apostates.” On February 12, 1943, it put forth its own paper *Al-Qā‘idah* (The Base),[30] a name that was meant to suggest that the base–the rank and file–had kept faith, and that it was the base and not the apex that formed the core and essence of the party.

For their part, the Congress-ists showed indignation at having been completely ignored by Mas‘ūd, and refused to give any weight to his “sham” and “undemocratically constituted” congress.[31]

At this juncture, reports began to circulate in the underground that Fahd would be returning soon from Russia armed with the necessary mandate entitling him to lead the party.[32] Fahd arrived in mid-April 1943. When the news reached Mas‘ūd’s camp, they hurriedly sent word to him that there was no need to perpetuate the division and that the issues were negotiable. “I agreed to negotiate with them,” wrote Fahd afterwards,[33]

TABLE 19-2

Fahd’s Second Central Committee 24 November 1942 to February 1945

Name	*Nation and sect*	*Date and place of birth*	*Profession*	*Education*	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with communism*	*Subsequent history*
Yūsūf Salmān Yūsuf (Fahd)	(See Table 14-2)						
Dāūd Ṣāyegh[a,b]	(See Table 19-1)						
Zakī Basīm	(See Table 19-1)						
Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī	(See Table 19-1)						
Amīnah ar-Raḥḥāl[c]	(See Table 19-1)						
Aḥmad ‘Abbās, known as ‘Abd Tamr[d]	Arab, Sunnī	1914, Baghdād	Ex-railway worker; mechanic with British forces	Did not complete elementary	Peasant class; son of a peasant	1934 (20)	No trace of whereabouts after 1948

[a]Led Central Committee during Fahd’s absence from Iraq (November 1942 to April 1943).

[b]Arrested May 13, 1943; on his release on December 12, 1943, put on an inactive status by Fahd, which drove him to abandon the party and form factional League of Iraqi Communists.

[c]Dropped from Central Committee in 1943.

[d]Co-opted to Central Committee in 1943.

> in the hope of coming to an understanding or at least to get to know personally their pretexts for plotting the schism and seizing the party paper and the party publishing facilities. On the first day, they said that they were prepared to forget what happened and to revert to the situation previously existing, that is, to consider their congress null and

void and to reinstate the old Central Committee. But on the next day their leader Riyāḍ [‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd] took an altogether different attitude. He demanded the recognition of their congress and their central committee as properly constituted organs of the party, in other words, the recognition of their faction as the Communist Party of Iraq. He claimed that I had written to him approving the convoking of the congress, although I have not written any such thing.[34] He also insisted on expelling from the Party the persons who signed the statement which exposed his opportunism.[35] He assured me of a place on the Central Committee and gave me a verbal guaranty that I would be reelected as Secretary, but threatened to take steps against me should I not agree to their conditions. When I enquired as to the nature of the steps envisaged, he said that they would expose me. I told him that they had already done so. He replied: “We exposed your personal acts; we shall now expose your party acts and capacities.” I then thanked him for his noble-mindedness and the noble-mindedness of his group, and said that I would lay their conditions before the party and act as it would direct me.

To Fahd it must have seemed that Mas‘ūd’s real purpose in dangling before him the secretariat was to compromise him by making use of him to hit at his own supporters. In any event, his growing mistrust of Mas‘ūd and the realization that concessions were neither prudent nor necessary induced him to break off the negotiations. Nothing would content him, he intimated, short of Mas‘ūd’s complete surrender.

The police now interfered to solve for Fahd part of his problems. On May 13, 1943, they unexpectedly launched a general and systematic search for Communists. Mas‘ūd, his entire committee, and all who took part in his congress were nabbed.[36] The leading Congress-ists and a number of Fahd’s adherents, including Dāūd Ṣāyegh,[37] his chief lieutenant, also fell into the carefully spread net, but Fahd himself eluded it. Six years later he recounted to his companions in the prison of Kūt the circumstances of his narrow escape.[38] There was, he said, a knock at the door. He went to see who it was and found himself face to face with the police. For an instant he paused, losing some of his assurance, but quickly recovered his normal poise on being assailed by a question impatiently asked: “Does Yūsuf Salmān live

here?" The police officer, who could have had for a lead only a sixteen-year-old photograph, had not recognized him. Fahd pointed to the upper floor of the house. As the officer and his company made for the staircase, Fahd made for the door and the alley that lay between himself and safety.

The blows struck by the police left most of the Congress-ists little heart for further struggle. On 14 June 1943, they resolved to discontinue the publication of *Il-al-Amām*. "To go on issuing conflicting journals," they declared by way of apology, "could have only a baneful effect on sincere Communists and would be nothing less than wanton destruction."[39]

Ash-Sharārah, Mas'ūd's organ, also ceased to appear. Those of its editors who had escaped arrest made their peace with the authorities and professed to take their cue from "the Soviet Government's decree" of 16 May 1943 dissolving the Communist International.[40]

Many of Mas'ūd's followers, however, refused to give up the fight and wrote to Fahd appealing for unity "at any cost," but at the same time insisted on "a provisional parity Central Committee," with an equal number from each of "the *Sharārah* and *Qā'idah* groups" to prepare for a party congress. "A 'foreign' comrade had warned us months ago that if we would not combine with one another, we should find ourselves combined together in the prisons at the hand of the reaction. His prophecy is well-nigh realized."[41]

"Not every split makes for weakness nor is every unity a source of strength," Fahd replied. He expressed his readiness to accept back the members of "the new *Sharārah* faction" individually or *en bloc*, but would not agree to conditions that could not be reconciled with the good of the party. The demand for a parity committee was simply a demand for "two organizations, two commands, two policies in one party." Without unity of will there could be no common action and without common action the unity sought after would be chimerical. As to the holding of a party congress–a cry first raised by the Congress-ists and in which the entire opposition now warmed and blinded itself–it was time to come to grips with the real conditions of the party:

> To begin with, the party is still in a malleable stage, its formations are strikingly deficient and its cadres limited and lacking in

experience. Under the circumstances a congress can only produce an empty bluster, if not an ideological muddle.

Secondly, in the existing international conditions the holding of congresses by secret Communist parties in countries adhering to the democratic camp could provoke collisions between the Communists and the authorities that are in the interests of neither side nor to the good of the peoples struggling against fascism. . . .

Thirdly, . . . the party is illegal, works in circumstances characterized by intimidation, and is ever and anon pestered by police raids. . . . This being the case, it is scarcely possible to assemble a truly representative congress without the police knowing about it. . . .[42]

Fahd reverted to this subject in his essay, *A Communist Party Not a Democratic Socialism*.[43] He again refused to have anything to do with congresses, appealing this time to the experience of other secret parties.

The Communist Party of India [he pointed out] held its First Congress in 1943, that is, fifteen years after it was founded (and had by then emerged from illegality). After turning from open to clandestine struggle, the Communist parties of Germany, Italy, France, and Spain did not organize any congresses. The meeting of the First Congress of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party in 1898 was quickly followed by the arrest of its Central Committee and many of its prominent members. Its other congresses assembled in foreign countries out of the reach of the Tsarist police. . . .[44]

All the "chatter" in Iraq about calling a congress, Fahd concluded, could have no other object but to expose the most active revolutionaries and deliver them into the jaws of the authorities.[45]

If the holding of a party congress was impractical, how then was the leadership of the Iraqi party to be selected, and on what principles was the party to be organized? In the essay just quoted, Fahd felt that he must also give a considered answer to these questions. He conceded at once that the Bolshevik party was the model for all the other Communist parties, that its organization was "the highest form of organization," and that as then constituted it rested on the principle of "democratic centralism," He

hastened to add, however, that the experience of the Bolshevik party could not be applied "blindly" to Iraq.[46] Moreover, there could be no "fixed principle" of organization. The circumstances in which the party would find itself at any one stage in its development had to be taken into account. In the background now lay the power of imperialism, an inexperienced Iraqi working class, and "a government by intimidation"–all of which militated for a "crusading," "semi-military," "centralized" Communist party. In such conditions, the Central Committee would most likely consist of the founders of the party and of members co-opted by them. By the same token, the leaders of a lower party body would be "nominated or appointed" by the leaders of a higher party body, although the nominees or appointees could, for good grounds, be rejected by the lower body concerned. Briefly, in the Iraqi situation "democratic centralism" had to give way to out-and-out "centralism."[47]

Fahd wound up his essay with a warning to his opponents and detractors: "Let the opportunists take notice . . . that we shall concentrate against them 90 percent of our forces and this will not be in vain, for we shall wage the fight in the spheres of class and national mass action."

There were sufficient reasons for this stern warning. In February 1944, as Fahd was adding the final touches to his essay, not only did the remnants of the Congress-ists and *Ash-Sharārah* group show new signs of life–in March they would join hands and issue *Waḥdat-un-N idal* (Unity of the Struggle)–but Fahd's one-time deputy, Dāūd Ṣāyegh, broke with him and steered a course of his own founding the factional League of Iraqi Communists.[48]

Dāūd Ṣāyegh,[49] who would return to plague the Communists in more crucial moments, was a lawyer without cause, one of a class at no time more abundant in Iraq than in the forties. A native of Mosul, he descended from a well-known Chaldean family of goldsmiths and men of religion. His grandfather is said to have headed in the middle of the nineteenth century a movement of opposition to the spread of papal power over the Chaldean Church–"the first liberation movement in Iraq," in Ṣāyegh's reckoning.[50] A source of no less pride to him was his uncle, Sulaimān, a priest, novelist, historian, an upholder of nationalism in the years of outright British rule, and in the fifties the Chaldean Bishop of Mosul.

Dāūd himself possessed some ability, much ambition, and no little faith in his own worth. His ability was of the negative kind: he was more his

natural self, it appears, as a critic, as an oppositionist, than in other roles. His enemies–with his later services to General Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim more particularly in mind–contend that he was quite without principles, and would not have hesitated from ruining the party in order to raise himself. Perhaps it would be fairer to say that he had the very common failing of mixing his private desires with the good of the party, and the no less frequent inability to march in step.

At any rate, his break with Fahd was prompted, it is clear, by purely personal considerations. He had been arrested, it will be remembered, during the vigorous police raid of May 1943. On his release on bail on December 14, Fahd relegated him to an inactive status on the grounds that he was under close police supervision and his immediate reinstatement would expose the party to unnecessary dangers. "This," says a contemporary police account, "was taken by Dāūd Ṣāyegh as a personal insult and led to his estrangement from the party."[51] Obviously Fahd had thought of the welfare of the movement, without taking into account Ṣāyegh's vanity. Nonetheless, when Ṣāyegh turned against the party, he could not refrain from representing his action as a principled rebellion against Fahd's "autocracy" and "left-deviation," and, like the older oppositionists, went into print–issuing in April 1944 *Al-'Amal*[52]–and raised the cry for a party congress.[53]

Al-'Amal appeared only intermittently, and remained a gray and colorless journal. Partly for this reason, partly because Ṣāyegh lacked finish as an organizer, and partly on account of insufficient funds–his first year in opposition resulted in a deficit of eighty dīnārs[54]–Ṣāyegh's League of Iraqi Communists made little headway, and never really amounted to much. The investigations that followed the uncovering of the organization in 1947-1948 revealed that the league had altogether forty-two active members,[55] including seven army officers, one of whom–Staff Captain Salīm Fakhrī–was later to figure in a role of some prominence.[56]

The splits, polemics, factional maneuvers, and so on, inspired doubts in Fahd as to the fitness for party leadership of lawyers, litterateurs–the "petty-bourgeois intellectuals" in general.[57] They talked, debated, criticized, played at democracy, made many bones about freedom of opinion, accepted discipline only platonically, cloaked petty passions with ambitious

Communist phrases, and were constitutionally unable to involve themselves in the struggles and miseries of the workers and peasants. Fahd's respect for the revolutionary value of people from humbler origins increased rapidly.

However, as Fahd went forward with his efforts to cover the country with a network of underground cells, he realized the difficulty of excluding the intelligentsia from leading roles. The relatively small number of industrial workers were, in their bulk, illiterate, inexperienced, limited in their outlook, of recent peasant or artisan origin, and, therefore, still devoid of the qualities–the organizational habits–that only prolonged exposure to the discipline of the factory engenders; in brief, they were not as yet ready for command. All that Fahd could do, while taking in hand the training of a number of select workers, was to choose the members of the intelligentsia with care. He enrolled only the less argumentative types, the ones more disposed to act and accomplish things, and preferably those who came from poor and lowly families–in Fahd's words "the people's intelligentsia."[58]

Even so, Fahd henceforth retained all real power entirely in his own hands, and kept a vigilant eye on everything that happened in the party. Important decisions now emanated from him alone, and his colleagues on the Central Committee functioned only in his shadow. At the same time, Fahd wielded his power with greater discretion than before, and consulted closely with several of his faithful and durable followers and, above, all, with Zakī Basīm.

Basīm[59]–Fahd's own discovery–appears to have been a somewhat limited man, but quiet, reliable, hard-working, and of rare single-heartedness. He came from a family of humble extraction and in his childhood passed through all manner of distress. He had to leave school at a very early age and spend years in coarse and ill-paid toil as a learner-laborer in a tannery in Baghdād. When he grew up, his strength of character spurred him on to continue his interrupted education. He made up the lost ground in a night school, and obtained his elementary certificate in 1936 at the age of twenty-three, and his secondary baccalaureate five years later. In the meantime he had abandoned the tannery, and at first served as a deliveryman and then rose to a clerkship in the government's Water Department. In 1942 he met Fahd, who conquered him completely. "I found him," Basīm subsequently told the police,[60] "a patriot who worked in the public interest with unwavering fidelity and conviction. . . . He opened his heart to me and

asked me to join with him in the struggle. . . . Having realized how badly off the country was . . . I decided to accept." In time Fahd and Basīm became very intimate in thought and action. They lived in the same house, looked into every problem together, and acted invariably in unison. But Fahd was twelve years' Basīm's senior, and head and shoulders above him in his knowledge of the theory and art of communism. It was basically, therefore, a relationship between teacher and pupil. Basīm never questioned Fahd's power of ultimate decision, and all too eagerly drew his intellectual nourishment from him. On the other hand, Basīm was the only individual with whom Fahd shared the whole process of his thought.[61]

Two other men on whom Fahd leaned heavily were ʻAlī Shukur[62] and Aḥmad ʻAbbās.[63] ʻAlī Shukur was a proletarian down to the marrow of his bones. The son of an extremely poor laborer, and with only three years of formal schooling, he ground out a livelihood by working in the railways as a locomotive driver. Aḥmad ʻAbbās–better known as ʻAbd-Tamr , "the dates' slave," because his diet consisted of bread and dates and little else–was the son of an indigent peasant. While still a child he helped his father in the fields, but unable to provide for his needs, he abandoned agriculture in 1927–at the age of thirteen–and went to work at the main railway repair shops at Shālchiyyah, in the western outskirts of Baghdād. He remained there until 1940, and after spending the next two years in a textile factory, ended up as a mechanic with the British forces of occupation. Unlike ʻAlī Shukur, who was converted by Fahd himself and only in 1941, ʻAbd-Tamr had been won over by Baghdādī Communists as early as 1934. But both Shukur and ʻAbd-Tamr supported Fahd from 1941 onwards through every vicissitude, and showed energy and dedication in fulfilling the tasks he set for them. He accordingly took them under his wing, trained them personally and with care, and eventually charged them with the execution of the party's labor policies. He also chose ʻAlī Shukur to head the Railway Workers' Union, the forefront labor organization in the years 1944-1945, and raised ʻAbd-Tamr to membership of the Central Committee and the Politbureau of the party.[64]

Of the other Communists in whom Fahd reposed confidence, the most noteworthy was Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī,[65] an elementary schoolteacher and the son of an *ʻālim*– a divine–from Najaf. A disciple of Fahd, a member of the Central Committee since 1941, he rose to the

Politbureau in 1945, and had charge in the years 1944-1946 of the entire southern party administrative division–and the only such division at the time–embracing party organizations in the provinces of Baṣrah, ‘Amārah, and Muntafiq.

‘Abd-ul-Azīz ‘Abd-ul-Hādī, a native of al-‘Aḍhamiyyah, a district of Greater Baghdād, was also highly valued by Fahd. ‘Abd-ul-Hādī began life as a second lieutenant in the army, but in 1940–in his twenty-third year–was brought to trial before a special martial court on the charge of plotting the assassination of the Four Colonels, the then real rulers of the country. He was acquitted by his judges, but the authorities dismissed him from the army and placed him under police surveillance. In 1941 he joined the Communist party, but in October of the same year his reported participation in the Rashīd ‘Ālī movement led to his rearrest and exile, at first to Fao[66] and later to ‘Amārah. On his release in 1943, he entered the School of Law and rejoined the party. Fahd promoted him quickly, and made him responsible for the military cells affiliated to the party and–under Zakī Basīm’s over-all supervision–for activities among college students.

These were the men that stood nearest to Fahd and at the very center of all party work in the years 1943 to 1947. They differed from their predecessors in that they never called Fahd’s authority in question, trusted implicitly in his judgments, and carried out his orders without hesitation. With their help, Fahd pulled the party out of the morass into which the bitter controversies of the past had driven it. Particularly from 1945 onwards, underground cells multiplied, not only in Baghdād and other important towns, but even in remote and insignificant places. Revolutionary doctrines also spread into the military camps, from which the authorities were specially determined to avert their temptations. Moreover, the activities of the party shed their spasmodic and incoherent character, and its organizations gained in solidity and ideological homogeneousness.

These gains could be attributed only in part to the inner cohesion of the party’s new leading nucleus. To no small degree–at least as far as the advance in numbers was concerned–they followed from the new external circumstances of the party.[67] A share of the credit was perhaps also due to the opposition which Fahd had so strongly resented, for Fahd ended by drawing up a program and internal rules for the party, and by calling at first a party conference, and ultimately a party congress. In thus acting, Fahd not

only put the party on a firmer footing, but attracted back into the party folds many of the dissident Communists. But his concession to the opposition was purely formal. The program and the rules came entirely from his hands. The members of the conference and congress were hand-picked by him personally; while they supplied information, they advanced no arguments, raised no objections, and approved all what was laid before them. Of course, the conditions of the underground rendered any real elections impractical, and Fahd's theoretical knowledge and practical experience were so superior that the conferees could in effect do nothing other than nod approval.

For all that, there was clearly a reversal of attitude on the part of Fahd. The latter–it appears–had come to realize that while "the principles of Leninism and the history of the Bolshevik party and of Marxism in general" established the basic and ultimate orientation for the Iraqi Communist movement, there was need for a program and rules that would take into account the specific features of Iraqi life, define precisely the immediate objectives and the transitional means of struggle, ensure correct internal relations, and, in general, provide a sound theoretical foundation for a broader and more consistent activity.[68] Perhaps in coming round to this view–and he came round to it rather suddenly–Fahd was less influenced by the opposition than by the fact that a congress of the legally recognized Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon met in Beirut from December 31, 1943, to January 2, 1944, and adopted a charter and an appropriate body of rules. Fahd must also have felt that, after all, he had now a firmer grip on the party, and that a conference or a congress was less likely to produce unorthodox or undesirable ideas. Moreover, in measure as the attitude of the Iraqi government toward the Soviet Union mellowed, its vigilance relaxed so that the organization of party meetings entailed fewer risks than formerly. This, however, became more truly the case after the opening of formal Iraqi-Soviet relations, that is, after 25 August 1944.

The party conference–the first in Communist annals–met in strictest secrecy in March 1944, in the house of the locomotive driver Alī Shukur in Baghdād's working-class district of ash-Shaikh 'Umar, and was attended by the four members of the Central Committee[69] and by fourteen other Communists chosen from the different local and branch party organizations (consult Table A-1). In its composition, the conference reflected more or

less adequately the distribution of party strength in the provinces and among the nationalities. At the time, the Iraqi Communist party was an overwhelmingly Arab, urban, and lower-middle-class party, and drew its followers primarily from Baghdād and the southernmost provinces of Muntafiq, Baṣrah, and ʻAmārah. It had also a small concentration of supporters in Najaf. Its Kurdish component was still piteously weak, as most Kurdish Communists had either enrolled in the *Shursh* organization[70] or had sided with the oppositionist *Waḥdat-un-Niḍāl*. The latter group had also absorbed the majority of the Jewish Communists.[71] That a little less than half of the attendance had been associated with the party for only one or two years is telling evidence of the erosive effects of factionalism.

Fahd, who was known to many of the participants only by his party name, opened the conference on behalf of the Central Committee and began immediately by reading a report on the international and Iraqi conditions of the party. He spoke, as was his custom, in a slow manner and without emotion. He referred to the victories of the Soviet army, the dissolution of the Comintern, the resolutions of the Moscow and Teheran conferences on the independence of the peoples, the marked advance in Iraq of British influence and of foreign exploitation, the steady and odious decrease of internal liberties, and the ever-widening chasm between the government and the people. All this, he added, necessitated a clear definition of the immediate aims and tactics of the party. Hence the need for adopting a program without delay.[72]

Zakī Basīm (“Comrade Ḥāzim”) rose after that and delivered a paper on “Party Work among the Youth.”[73] He was followed by Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī (“Comrade Ṣārim”), who spoke on “The Educational Duty of the Party.”[74] The other delegates, to whom the conference had come as a complete surprise, sat throughout in shy and diffident silence and, when the time came, approved unanimously and with little debate the party program that Fahd had drawn up.[75]

The program or, more properly, the National Charter of the party,[76] combined patriotic and democratic postulates with a more or less petty-bourgeois perspective. It gave strong expression to the desires of the small producers and petty traders. In regard to the workers, it confined itself almost entirely to legalist and “economist” demands. Social antagonisms found very faint echoes in it, and the semifeudal power that pervaded the

countryside came in only for a feeble arraignment. In brief, had it had no title, it would have been difficult to infer that this was the program of a party engaged in a Communist struggle.

To be more specific, the Charter[77] called for "the true independence of our country,"[78] for "a genuinely democratic regime . . . and the revival of the Constitution,"[79] for "supplying the basic necessities of life to the people at prices commensurate with their level of income,"[80] for "the development of the national economy,"[81] for "delivering the people . . . from the monopolistic hold of foreign companies . . . on our agricultural products . . . and the creation of free markets,"[82] for "stopping the plunder of state lands by those in authority . . . or their alienation to the tribal shaikhs . . . and the distribution of these lands in small patches to the peasants without charge," for "freeing the peasants from illegal and unjust rents, fees, and khāwas,"[83] for "organizing the workers, the recognition of their unions, and the passing of laws favorable to them," for the "fulfillment and expansion of the rights acknowledged in Labor Law [No. 72 of 1936] and its amendments,"[84] for "lifting the tax burden from people of low incomes, exempting craftsmen and shopkeepers from municipality fees, and reducing all indirect imposts,"[85] for "the spreading of learning among the people,"[86] "the granting of equal rights to women. . .[87] and to the Kurdish . . . and other national minorities,"[88] for "giving the soldier good care, . . . training him in a democratic way, . . . and freeing him from flogging and other inhuman methods," for "purging the army from fifth columnists and reactionary elements,"[89] for "cooperating in the political, economic, and cultural spheres with all the democratic peoples," and, last but not least, for "the opening of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union."[90]

Although free from any tinge of revolution, the Charter was regarded as an expression of revolutionary realism. In effect, it was more a political weapon than a program for action and, of course, it was anything but the last word of the party. It rested on the implicit premise of the inevitability of a number of stages and turning-points in the progress of communism in Iraq and answered to what the Party Conference defined in its final resolution as "the stage of national liberation and of the struggle for democratic rights."[91] For the party to chase in the Iraq of 1944 the shadow of revolution was purely and simply to cut itself off from life.

The delegates of the Conference ended their meeting by adopting for their own the Syrian Communist formula: “A Free Homeland and a Happy People,” which has remained to this very day the central watchword of Iraqi communism. They also declared themselves with Fahd to the end and inseparably.

The year that separated the First Party Conference from the First Party Congress passed uneventfully, that is, on the surface and insofar as the inner life of the party was concerned. There were no new divisions, no intrigues, no war of words, no police raids. But the party grew in silence. Fahd never worked harder in his life. He went to and fro, wrote, inculcated, enjoined, warned, organized, improvised, planned, and accomplished and left his mark everywhere on the party. In March 1945 he finally decided that the time had come to call a congress and give the movement a fresh impulse.

The Congress assembled in the house of the schoolteacher Yahūda Ṣiddīq[92] in al-Karkh in Baghdād. Of the twenty-seven Communists who attended it, seventeen had been present at the First Party Conference. Its makeup (consult Table A-2) distinctly reveals that the party had not in the interval changed to any significant degree its ethnic, religious, or class complexion, and that it continued–in the main–to anchor itself on Baghdād and the south of Iraq, despite its undoubted growth in size.

Fahd’s influence at the Congress was, it goes without saying, complete. But he dominated the members without constraining them. They surrendered their will into his hands less by reason of his tough and unyielding temper than because they felt he knew more and saw farther than anyone present.[93]

As at the conference, Fahd began by reporting on the external conditions of the party. The central point of this portion of his remarks was that no fundamental change had taken place in the year gone by in the Iraqi or the world situation and that, therefore, the general policy that had found expression in the National Charter remained valid. Fahd then turned to “the urgent question of the hour.”

The Charter, he said, fulfilled only one of the needs of the party. It proclaimed the aims of the Communists without ambiguity and revealed to the people the “patriotic,” “popular,” “progressive,” and “humane” essence of communism. However, one other need, which was no less vital, had thus far not been met. The party was still without internal rules. “Evil people”

cast aspersions on it for that reason. He himself had opposed in the past the calling of a congress to deal with the problem. The cadre was then simply too deficient in consciousness and experience. This could not be said of the delegates now assembled, who truly formed "a unity of will and action" and thus possessed the right to formulate rules, make policies, and elect their own leaders.[94]

Here Fahd presented to the congress the draft of the Internal Rules which-he said-the Central Committee had "ordered" him to prepare and which comprised basic views on the character, class ingredients, long-range aims, and internal relations of the party.[95]

"The Iraqi Communist Party," the Rules declared, "is the party of the Iraqi working class."[96] But it also included in its ranks "peasants, craftsmen, the intelligentsia of the people, . . . the lower employees, the petty traders, and the *kasabah,"*[97] inasmuch as the working class sought "national sovereignty, democratic freedoms, progress, and well-being not only for itself but for all the classes and strata of the people."[98] Even in the long run, it aimed at "liberating not merely the workers" but to no lesser degree "the peasants, artisans, small proprietors, and the intelligentsia from all forms of exploitation."[99] All the same, the party clung to "the teachings of Marx and Lenin and, in its remote ends, was at one with the world Communist parties."[100]

Inasmuch as the Iraqi working class confronted "organized and powerful enemies"[101] and "hordes of opportunists," and lived in a society dominated by "arbitrary and Nazi laws,"[102] the Communist party, by constraint rather than by choice, had taken on the character of "a secret, fighting party welded together by iron discipline . . . and committed to the practice of self-criticism."[103] The party also adhered to "democratic centralism" but applied this principle "in a manner consistent with the nature of underground work."[104]

This particular formulation involved a departure, however qualified, from the purely "centralist" view expressed by Fahd in February 1944 in his essay, *A Communist Party Not a Democratic Socialism*. But in their main drift, the Rules tended in fact to reassert the principle of "centralism." Thus, while recognizing an elective party congress–meeting if possible once in two years and in extraordinary sessions when necessary–as "the highest organ of the party,"[105] the Rules barred it from looking into party acts–or

from auditing party accounts–which, by reason of the circumstances of the underground, the Central Committee did not deem prudent to disclose.[106] Moreover, the Rules empowered the Central Committee "to annul or suspend the resolutions of party congresses . . . should the grounds that led to their adoption lapse or if, in the wake of a change of conditions, their continued enforcement would bring harm to the party."[107] The Central Committee was also to assume the responsibilities of the party congress in times of trouble, or if the party came to grief in consequence of "external terrorism or internal sabotage."[108]

Of no little interest is the article of the Rules relating to the qualifications and duties of party members. It contained, of course, the usual "Paragraph 1" for which Lenin had fought in vain in 1903 at the Second Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Labour party, namely,

> A party member must . . . 1. accept the party program and rules, 2. support the party financially, and 3. participate personally in one of the party organizations.[109]

But there were also in the article a number of more or less original provisions:

5a. No party member is permitted to work with any of the intelligence or propaganda services of foreign states.
b. No party member may join the local police . . . or enter into contact or establish a relation with high officers of the state or high departments of the government without the knowledge and approval of the party.
c. No member may belong to another party or group except with the consent of the party.
d. It is incumbent upon a party member to avoid the agents of the police and of foreign powers and the reactionary and Trotskyite enemies of the party.
e. No member may leave his town or party organization without advance notice to the party.

Some of these paragraphs seem to be purely protective in their intent: there were simply too many provocateurs around, and the party could stand a

tightening of its defenses. A certain desire–evident elsewhere[110]–to avoid giving the authorities unnecessary provocations appears also to express itself here. Other paragraphs were clearly related to the factional struggle. The points touching on foreign states (in 5a and d) ought perhaps to be read in the light of the arrival a month or so before of Krikorii Titovich Zaitzev, the first Soviet minister in Baghdād. Fahd could not shut his eyes to the possible complications for the party entailed in official Soviet presence, nor could he have wished to embarass the new Soviet minister or hinder his diplomatic work in any way. There were other more secure channels for communicating with international communism. Fahd was at the same time anxious to ward off accusations that the Communists were the "hirelings" of the Soviet Union or engaged in "espionage" on its behalf.

With a unanimity that was never in doubt, the congress gave its approval to all the paragraphs referred to, and to the remaining rules that formalized an already existing structure of party branches, provincial committees, and primary organizations.[111] It also compensated for the omission of any reference to inter-Arab relations in the National Charter by adding to it a number of appropriate articles.[112]

Before dispersing, the congress elected the new Central Committee of the party or, more accurately, consented to a list drawn up by Fahd and his colleagues Basīm, ash-Shabībī, and ʻAbd-Tamr, who were now elevated to the revived Politbureau. Besides these three and Fahd, the new Committee included as full members Sharif Mulla ʻUthman, a Kurdish coffee-man; Krikor Badrossian, an Armenian musician; and the schoolteachers Sāmī Nādir, a Sunnī Moslem; Mālik Saif, a Sabean; and Yahūda Ṣiddīq, a Jew (for full particulars see Table 19-3). At the congress they were, of course, identified only by their conspirative pseudonyms. The preponderance of teachers in this committee (seven of its sixteen members)[113] is noticeable at once. This perhaps fitted with the party's stage of development: the whole party was still, so to say, at school–struggling, to be sure, with the alphabet of revolution. The schoolteachers, it should also be noted, formed one of the more sorely pressed strata of the petty bourgeoisie. In a period of high prices and shortage of necessities, they were bound to fixed money incomes augmented by wholly inadequate cost-of-living allowances.

The new Central Committee would seldom occupy the center of the stage in the next few years. It was to meet in plenary sessions only twice: in

September 1945 and in the summer of 1946. The direct leadership of the party remained conclusively in the hands of Fahd and Zakī Basīm, who came to constitute what might be termed as the stable party center. Who participated with them in any particular decision depended upon the particular question to be settled, or upon the particular party sector or party organization involved. If it was a matter touching on workers, then advice was sought from ʻAbd Tamr or ʻAlī Shukur, or both. If the problem related to the soldiers or the students, then ʻAbd-ul-ʻAziz ʻAbd-ul-Hādī, a member of the party's Military Committee, or Yahuda Ṣiddīq, one of the basic organizers of the students of Baghdād contributed to the solution. And so on. Underground conditions almost inevitably led to this mode of decision making.

In the meantime, as an immediate sequel to the Party Congress, the faction of *Waḥdat-un-Niḍāl* submitted to the party unconditionally.[114] There would be no point, its leaders wrote to Fahd on 20 April 1945, for the movement to keep tearing at its own vitals. "Now that the Congress of *Al-Qāʻidah*[115] has adopted a program and rules for the party, the differences between us have vanished."[116] In point of fact, they had begun to feel that against an old and tried Communist like Fahd they could go nowhere. Nobody was listening to them any more, and Fahd's steady advance threatened to drive them off the underground.

TABLE 19-3

Fahd's Third Central Committee (February 1945 to 18 January 1947)

Name	*Party position and function in 1945*	*Nation and religion*	*Date and place of birth*	*Profession*
Members of the Politbureau				
Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf (Fahd)	Secretary general		(See Table 14-2)	
Zakī Basīm	Closest assistant of Fahd		(See Table 19-1)	
Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī	Secretary of Southern Party Zone[b]		(See Table 19-1)	
Aḥmad ʿAbbās (known as ʿAbd Tamr)	Member of Labor Committee attached to Central Committee		(See Table 19-2)	
Other Members of the Central Committee				
Sāmī Nadir Muṣṭafa	*Masʾūl*[c] of Baṣrah Local Committee		(See Table 14-2)	
Sharīf Mulla ʿUthmān	Secretary of Kurdish Branch	Kurd, Sunnī	1925, Arbīl	Coffee-man
Krikor Agop Badrossian	Secretary of Armenian Branch	Armenian, Christian	1906, ʿEin Tāb, Turkey	Musician
Mālik Saif	*Masʾūl* of ʿAmārah Local Committee	Arab, Sabean	1917, ʿAmārah	Elementary schoolteacher
Yahūda Ṣiddīq	Member of Baghdād Local Committee and *Masʾūl* of students	Jew (of Persian origin)	1914, Samāwah	Secondary schoolteacher
Candidate Members of the Central Committee				
Ismaʿīl Aḥmad	Member Baṣrah Local Committee; *Masʾūl* of workers	Arab, Sunnī	?, Baṣrah	Shoe-worker
Mūsa Muḥammad Nūr	Member ʿAmārah Local Committee; *Masʾūl* of students	Arab, Shīʿī	?, ʿAmārah	Elementary schoolteacher
Muḥammad ʿAlī Zarqā	Member Baghdād Local Committee	Arab, ʿAlawī	1917, Alexandretta	Secondary schoolteacher
Muḥammad ʿAlī ash-Shabībī[d]	*Masʾūl* of Najaf Local Committee	Arab, Shīʿī	1920, Najaf	Official of Irrigation Department
ʿAbd-ul-Wahhāb ʿAbd-ur-Razzāq	Member Baghdād Local Committee; *Masʾūl* of Northern and Southern *Qiṭāʿs*[e] of Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī	1922, Baghdād	Elementary schoolteacher
Dāūd Salmān Yūsuf[f]	*Masʾūl* Nāṣiriyyah Local Committee	Arab (of Chaldean origin), Christian	1894, Baghdād	Electrician
Haskail Ibrahīm Ṣiddīq[g]	*Masʾūl* of Law School students	Jew (of Persian origin)	1921, Samāwah	Law student

Education	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*[a]	*Subsequent history*
Private religious	Lower middle class; son of a man of religion	1943 (18)	Left party 1948
American University of Beirut (2 years)	Lower middle class; son of a miller and victim of Turkish massacres	1943 (37)	Exiled to Lebanon 1953
Elementary Teachers' Training College	Lower middle class; son of a silversmith	1941 (24)	Betrayed party 1948
Higher Teachers' Training College	Lower middle class; son of an itinerant petty trader	1941 (27)	Hanged 1949
Elementary	Working class; son of a baker	1942 (?)	Killed in battle of Kūt prison 18 June 1953
Elementary Teachers' Training College	Lower middle class; son of a man of religion	1943 (?)	Left party 1948
Higher Teachers' Training College	Lower middle class	1935 (28)	Expelled from Iraq 1945, and from Syrian Communist party in 1957
Secondary	Lower middle class; son of a man of religion	1941 (21)	Left party 1948
Elementary Teachers' Training College	Lower middle class; son of a butcher	1942 (20)	Betrayed party 1948
Elementary	Lower middle class; son of a confectioner	1927 (33)	Left party 1948
Law School	Lower middle class; son of an itinerant petty trader	1942 (21)	?

[a]None of the members for whom information is given in this table had prior political activity.

[b]The Southern Party Zone embraced in 1945 the party organizations in the provinces of Baṣrah, ʻAmārah, and Muntafiq.

[c]*Masʻūl* or *Ar-Ratīq al-Masʻūl* = Comrade-in-charge.

[d]Brother of Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī.

[e]*Qitāʻ:* urban administrative division of party.

[f]Brother of Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf (Fahd).

[g]Brother of Yahūda Ṣiddiq.

Sources: In addition to writer's personal investigations, Iraqi Police File No. 4/1947 entitled *The Case of Fahd;* and Files No. 487, 3347, 3436, 6140, 3546, and 7680.

With the dissolution in early 1946 of the Kurdish *Shursh* organization, only Dāūd as-Ṣāyegh's spineless League of Iraqi Communists remained in opposition. The launching in the autumn of 1946 of a new rival group, the National Revolutionary Committee, by the veteran Communist Zakī Khairī[117] only lightly ruffled the life of the party. However, the emergence in the same year of the legal People's party under Azīz Sharīf presented Fahd, as will be seen in due course, with a serious challenge. Be that as it may, Fahd's active following numbered by this time already in the several thousands. The nearly desperate conditions of the poorer classes in the immediate postwar period, which were to lend to the *Wathbah* its unusual vehemence, added greatly to the party's force of attraction. More and more working people now turned toward it and identified their thoughts and their passions with its watchwords.

Thus by 1946, the party was a far cry from the frail and ineffectual organization that Fahd inherited in 1941. It commanded incomparably more supporters and sympathizers. It had become also more resolute, more tempered, and more tightly welded.

20

NEW SITUATIONS, NEW APPROACHES

When Fahd became secretary in October 1941, the party faced, by dint of its native roots and its international viewpoint, a most embarrassing dilemma. Hitler's sudden invasion of the "Country of Socialism," which turned the English and the Soviets into allies overnight, pointed plainly to the necessity of lending aid to Britain's war effort in Iraq. Under the conditions prevailing locally, however, there was no surer way for the party to cut the ground from under its own feet. The nationalist forces had only a few months before taken to arms and fallen beneath British blows.[1] The people were still tense, bitter, and dispirited. The days of June 1 and 2, when emotions went out of hand–many shops were gutted and several hundred persons killed–revealed something of the fires that burned under Baghdād's now tranquil exterior. Yet it seemed as if in such an atmosphere, and with open eyes and a full understanding, the party had to extend the hand of friendship to Iraq's overlords.

Fahd had at first refused to accept–or failed to discern–the logical consequences of the Anglo-Soviet alliance. Back in late June, close upon the German attack on Russia, he and the then secretary, ʻAbdallah Masʻūd, had worked out a solution that seemed to provide for the new developments. They carefully, distinguished between Britain's "imperialist war of conquest" and the "just war of defence" that the Soviet Union was waging. They appealed to the people of Iraq to give support to the Soviets by striving more determinedly than ever for their own independence and freedom. "The Soviet struggle against international fascism," they asserted, "finds its complement in the Iraqi struggle against internal fascism . . . i.e., against the dictatorial regime that British imperialism had forced upon the country . . . ." "It is an error to contend," they added by way of reply to the few dissenting voices in the party, "that the struggle against imperialism is

out of consonance with the struggle against fascism: imperialism is in many lands making use of fascism to strike at the liberation-movements."[2]

In the summer and autumn of 1941, the party showed no haste to abandon this approach. Whether it knew that Communists abroad were on the whole altogether differently oriented, it is not now possible to determine. *Labour Monthly*, a periodical of the British Communist party, which carried weight among Communists in many colonial and semicolonial countries, was read by party leaders only as frequently as it could be smuggled into Iraq. No Syrian Communist papers, the party's normal sources of reference, circulated at the time. *Ṣawt-ush-Sha'b*, the mouthpiece of the Syrian party, did not reappear until 20 January 1942.

In the meanwhile, the party's leadership had begun to adapt itself to the demands of the international situation, if cautiously and reluctantly. Toward the end of November 1941, the party's organ *Ash-Sharārah* addressed an unusual reproach to the British authorities:

> A section of the British officials in the Iraqi government and at the embassy and probably the British ambassador himself have thus far been unable to adjust to the requirements of the time. . . . True to their old traditions, they continue in the pursuit of their policies to lean upon a set of reactionaries with exclusive interests. . . . If the British government would instead seek support in the thick of the multitude, by allaying the cruel crisis in which they are choking[3] and by recognizing–and for the moment satisfying if only in part–the claims of the Arab peoples . . . then the free and enlightened Arab youth, backed by wide Arab masses, would even take up arms and fight for the democratic front which is also our front.[4]

Ash-Sharārah ended by offering the cooperation of the Communist party, but upon conditions. The paper demanded that–among other things–the problems of high prices, low wages, and unemployment be earnestly taken in hand, that democratic and trade union freedoms be conceded in practice, that "a formal statement be issued by the British government or its representatives attesting to the applicability to Palestine and all the other Arab countries of the right of national self-determination as provided in the

Atlantic Charter and that concrete measures be taken forthwith in that sense."[5]

The party's stand was still out of accord with the internationalist formula of unqualified and unconditional support for the war and for Russia's allies.[6] Even three months later, that is, in February 1942, the Central Committee could give, in a special resolution, nothing more than lip service to that formula. "With the entry of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Republic into the war and in consequence of the attitude shown by the American and English peoples, the hostilities," the resolution declared, "have shed their imperialist character." Indeed, " 'the war is now the war of all of humanity for upon its outcome depends the fate of every nation. . . .' The war is, therefore, also our war and we must take our place in the front of the democratic and free peoples."[7] On the face of it, the resolution conformed perfectly to rule. But it did not carry its thought through to the end, and shied away from any practical conclusion. In other words, it did not indicate what was concretely to be done in Iraq and specifically vis-à-vis the English, and thus never came to the point.

It was not until May 17, 1942, that Fahd finally steered the party along lines entirely congruent with the views of the international Communist community. In a ruthlessly straightforward report to the Central Committee, he seized the bull by the horns:

> Insofar as the harm that befalls any part of the united world democratic front is bound to affect the Soviet Union, our party regards the British army, which is now fighting Nazism, as an army of liberation. In other words, our support of the united world democratic front means that we are on the side of the English. . . . We must, therefore, help the British army in Iraq in every possible way, and in particular facilitate the transport of war material by railway,[8] and be on the lookout for plotters and saboteurs and for such incidents as the recent blow-up of a train at Ḥillah. To take thus the side of the English does not signify . . . that our acts are guided by them or result from their interference. The acts of our party flow, of course, from an independent policy . . . a policy based on the interests of the peoples fighting fascism and the interests of our country, our people, and our working class.[9]

Siding with the English meant, in practice, siding with Regent ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh, who occupied the monarchical summit, with the quasi-feudal landed shaikhs and aghas who dominated the countryside, and with the upper tiers of bureaucrat-*mallāks* and ex-Sharīfian officers turned *mallāks* who controlled directly the official apparatus of the government. In varying degrees the different elements of this composite ruling stratum lived and nourished themselves in the years 1941-1946 more upon their connections with the English than with their own people. In effect, the government at Baghdād was to no inconsiderable extent a kind of mediating agency between its people and the English and, understandably enough, lay in the focus of a general hostility, and governed more by martial law[10] and emergency decrees than by normal constitutional processes. Its political independence–particularly in the critical years of the world war–was more form than essence or, to be more accurate, it could not act politically in a fundamental manner except with British advice and approval.

In this system as in others, cabinets came and went–only more frequently. No fewer than nine were formed during the years of Fahd’s leadership of the party. But changes of cabinets did not produce changes in basic policy. The differences were simply in the temper of the individual premiers, in the means used, in the degree of competence or incompetence shown. The changes were induced sometimes by British dissatisfaction, sometimes by petty personal divisions, once by popular agitation, and more often than not by disagreements between the archpolitician of the system, the subtle and seasoned Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, and the somber, spiteful, and intriguing regent.

The attitude of the party toward this regime corresponded more or less to its attitude toward the English. At first it shrank from temporizing with it. Thus in June 1941, a few weeks after the collapse of the Rashīd ‘Ālī movement, the party unreservedly denounced the new, transitional, and relatively mild government of Jamīl al-Midfa‘ī[11] as “a species of fascism.”[12] In November, however, the party desisted from all direct polemics, even though its secretary, ‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd, had been arrested shortly before,[13] and the premiership had in the meantime passed into the vigorous hands of the unpopular Nūrī as-Sa‘īd.[14] The party also showed readiness to collaborate, but insisted on the prior granting of constitutional liberties.[15] This and offers in a similar vein made subsequently met only with chilly

indifference. Nonetheless, in February 1942, at the risk of stultifying its own position, the party threw in its lot with the government.[16] But it continued at the same time to press for freedom of thought and action.

> Your Excellency [*Ash-Sharārah* appealed to Premier Nūrī as-Saī‘d] could not but have observed the degree of cooperation between the Free French authorities and our comrades, the Communists of Syria. Democrats are not harassed in that country . . . and the Communists openly and freely publish their own newspapers and journals and have even access to the Beirut broadcasting station and can thus address the sons of the people directly. There couldn‘t be that much difference between the circumstances of Syria and Iraq. . . . Unleash, therefore, Your Excellency, the democratic freedoms in these lands.[17]

Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, to be sure, did not respond and, as could be expected, the support lent him by the Communists lacked throughout any real warmth. An unmistakable note of restraint persistently recurred in their utterances. Thus in his report of May 17, 1942, Fahd pointedly reminded the Central Committee that “the government which is now combatting Nazism . . . consists of the self-same persons who in the days just gone by persecuted democracy.”[18] Again, *Ash-Sharārah* of June 1942 distressingly noted the absence of any genuine rapport between the government and the people.[19] The party meant to leave its followers in no doubt that in holding out its hand to the authorities it was yielding to the logic of overpowering events, and yielding with a heavy heart.

This restrained support, which occasionally lapsed into ambiguity and half-wayness, remained completely one-sided until after the middle of 1943, when the government fell, if timidly and hesitantly, to condoning communism–a path onto which it did not venture very far.[20] The question of affording the party open and legal existence, of course, never arose.

Although allowed more rope than at any time in the past, the party began before very long and quite unexpectedly to speak with a wholly different voice. “The government and the English are at this moment sitting on a barrel of gunpowder and the anger of the people against them is sharpening from hour to hour . . . . ”[21] Thus Fahd in January 1944–eleven months after the Soviet victory at Stalingrad. Mass urban discontent, engendered by the

excessive rise in the cost of living and by crude economic exploitation, was real enough, but the explosion was still four years off. Fahd's warning sounded, therefore, like a rhetorical outburst, and was indeed denounced by his Communist opponents as sheer left-infantilism.[22] But quite apart from the high color in Fahd's expression, and even though the opposition to the government and the English was quickly keyed down to a more moderate tone, the warning signified that the party had cast loose from a policy that hampered its growth and which, in the feeling of not a few Iraqi "Marxists," carried it to the very boundaries of opportunism, if it did not involve a direct abandonment of Marx.[23]

The words "national liberation" now reappeared in the party vocabulary, and with the adoption of the National Charter[24] in March 1944 the freedom of Iraq became the foremost demand of the Communists.[25] Simultaneously, the party developed a printed agitation for a "genuinely democratic government" and for the recognition of "democratic parties and trade unions."[26] In concrete terms, all this did not lead in the following months to anything more than verbal pinpricks. One other thing is worthy of notice: not a shaft was directed against British military forces or their use of Iraq's bases and lines of communication.

A certain softness crept into the policy of the party after the resignation of the government of Nūrī as-Sa'īd and its supersession on June 4, 1944, by a cabinet headed by Ḥamdī al-Pāchachī, an elderly politician descended from a family of bureaucrat-*mallāks*.[27] The slight change in the party's attitude was induced by the new cabinet's opening of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union on August 25, and by its licencing on September 7 of the Communist-led Railway Workers' Union. In his report to the First Party Congress in March 1945, Fahd paid a subdued tribute to the government for complying in this partial degree with "the desires of the people" and, without changing tone, reproached it for its failure to allow political parties and personal freedoms.[28]

In April 1945–a month or so prior to Germany's unconditional surrender and five months before the end of the hostilities in the Far East–the immunity from criticism enjoyed by the British forces abruptly lapsed. *Al-Qā'idah* tersely declared: "the war effort in our country has become an undiluted imperialist effort."[29] Simultaneously, the party passed over to action. It led a fifteen-day strike of railway workers that well-nigh

paralyzed all military and civilian transport by rail.[30] How far the international factor entered then into the calculations of the party it is difficult to say, but there can be no question that its initiative was at least in part prompted by the great distress of the workers. The strike ended in a partial defeat: the strikers were granted wage advances, but their union was prohibited.

Thereafter Communist shafts against imperialism and the government flew thicker. It is not without interest, however, that throughout the rest of 1945 and well into January 1946, the party did not call for the outright abolition of the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty, but simply for a "revision" of its clauses "along lines consistent with national independence." Similarly, the party insisted only on "the canceling of the concessions granted to foreign companies during the war"[31]–the date export monopoly enjoyed by Andrew Weir and Co., for instance–and passed over in complete silence the long-standing concession of the Iraq Petroleum Company.

On 29 January 1946–shortly after the inauguration, in the Soviet-occupied zone of neighboring Iran, of an autonomous Azerbaijān and of the Mahabād Kurdish Republic[32]–and in an atmosphere of deepening discontent nourished by the incessant rise in the cost of living and the unrelenting denial of political freedoms, Fahd turned the helm of party policy sharply to the left. "The correct road for our democratic liberation movement," he roundly asserted, "is the road of revolutionary struggle. To depend on stirring the conscience of ministers or of British imperialism will not take us one step forward towards our goals."[33] The party had, of course, all along lived in the underground and acted secretly, in other words, its very form of existence was a revolutionary form of existence. But it had since 1935 shelved the revolutionary principle and abandoned the revolutionary manner of speech. So that the note now struck sounded quite new.

For the time being, however, the call for "revolutionary struggle" did not issue in anything concrete: the thoughts of the party were quickly deflected by exceptional and unanticipated events.

A breath of liberalism seemed to stir in the commanding monarchic heights. The regent had not been unaware of the state of public feeling or of the fact that royal power rested on a narrow political foundation, and apparently began to nurse the hope of rallying the more conscious elements of the middle class to the crown by giving them a limited stake in the body

politic and instituting economic reforms and constitutional liberties. The regent had pledged his regime to such a path in an unusual speech that he delivered on December 27, 1945. A whole month, however, slipped away after that, and not a sign of change could be discerned. The established classes that directly controlled the state apparatus, fearing a diminution of their influence, demurred. The feeling gained ground in popular circles that no real concessions would be forthcoming.[34]

However, on January 31, 1946, the recalcitrant government of al-Pāchachī[35] fell. There followed what came to be popularly known as "the crisis of the ruling class." For twenty-three days no new cabinet could be formed. In the end, the resistance to the liberalization of the regime by the cautious politicians of the reaction was overcome. The helm was entrusted on 23 February 1946 to Tawfīq al-Suwaidī, a *mallāk*-politician, descended from a family of *ashrāf* and *'ulamā'* The distinguishing feature of the new cabinet was the conferring of two key portfolios–Interior and Finance–on persons known for their progressive views: Sa'd Ṣāliḥ, a widely respected ex-governor, and 'Abd-al-Wahhāb Maḥmūd, a *lawyer-mallāk* who had been associated in the early thirties with the Baṣrah Communist circle.[36]

This somewhat unorthodox cabinet lasted no more than three months, but they were months rich in events. On March 2, 1946, martial law was lifted, press censorship ended, and Iraq's only detention camp closed. On April 2, five political parties were permitted: the right-wing, more or less pan-Arab Independence party, the centrist Liberal party, the left-of-center National Democratic party, the left-wing Party of National Union, and the Communist-influenced[37] People's party. The interesting thing about all these parties is that their leadership was predominantly drawn from the middle class or, more accurately, from the intelligentsia of the middle class. In this regard, however, the National Union and particularly the People's party were distinctly petty bourgeois, while the other parties afforded more congenial anchorage for the middle and upper bourgeoisie.[38]

Under the new circumstances, the tactic of revolutionary struggle adopted by the Communist party in January no longer made sense. Fahd, therefore, shelved it. He had, however, no great opinion of the Suwaidī government, and refused to give it support. He took umbrage because the Party of National Liberation, an auxiliary of the Communist party, was not officially licensed.[39] But the latitude allowed to that organization in practice

and the full recognition of another Communist front, the League Against Zionism, took the sting out of Fahd's opposition. In fact, the policy of the party toward the government vacillated and lost focus. Fahd shifted his attention to imperialism, and concentrated all his fire in that direction.[40]

The glowing passion with which the more militant of the legal parties plunged into activity in those fervid months, and the attendant popular excitement alarmed the conservative classes, who reacted by staging "the Senators' Strike" of 23 May 1946: their representatives absented themselves from the Senate, leaving Suwaidī's government without funds, thereby precipitating its downfall. It was a consummation that the regent, it appears, secretly promoted.[41] The latter had had, evidently, a change of heart. Liberalization had strayed from his ideas. The impulse given to the body politic threatened to disturb the existing correlation of social forces. A reversal of course became unavoidable. The result of the whole experiment could be imagined. By first launching a liberal reform and then checking it halfway, the regent frightened the pillars of the monarchist reaction without gaining the goodwill of the disaffected middle class. Perhaps more crucial was the further radicalization of this class and, in particular, of its lower layers, which ultimately only redounded to the advantage of communism. Moreover, the notion gathered force that, in a fundamental sense, the regime simply could not change its spots.

Under the next premier–Arshad al-'Umarī, a member of an ancient bureaucrat-*mallāk* family of Mosul[42]–reaction spread its wings. In the language of the opposition, freedom itself was trampled underfoot. The parties were not formally abolished, but their hands were tied and their journals muzzled or suppressed. As in other lands, under similar conditions, the reaction glided into violence from loss of nerves or from mere want of discernment. Indeed, in the days of al-'Umarī, government became with wide strata of the people a synonym for repression. Literally, this was the only significant achievement of his five-month cabinet.

Al-Umarī's hand was so heavy that the Communist party found it impossible to issue *Al-Qā'idah*, and it was not until 20 October 1946–three weeks before his resignation–that the paper reappeared. From the outset, however, the party determined on direct action. On 28 June 1946, at its bidding, the League Against Zionism and the unlicensed National Liberation party organized a demonstration in Baghdād in which upwards

of 3,000 workers and students took part. The marchers shouted against injustices in Palestine and for the expulsion of the British from Iraq. After they crossed from ar-Rasāfah to the Karkh side of Baghdād, and as they approached the British Embassy, the police descended upon them and, having failed to disperse them with clubs, fired at close range. One demonstrator, Shaūl Ṭuwayyeq, a member of the Communist party, was killed, and four others injured.[43] The incident is historic, marking as it does the opening of the storm that was to reach its climax in the *Wathbah* of 1948.[44] It formed also a milestone in another respect: it was the first time in the history of the monarchy that the police had opened fire on a demonstration. Needless to say, it provoked mordant criticism from the entire opposition, even from the right-wing Independence party.

But the incident of June 28 was soon overshadowed by the "massacre of Gāwūrpāghī." On July 3, some 5,000 workers of the Iraq Petroleum Company went on strike in Kirkūk. The initiative definitely came from the Communist party, but the inflation, the low wages, the strangling of the trade unions laid the road to the strike. Throughout the next eight days meetings were held continuously at Gāwūrpāghī–"the Gardens of the Infidels"[45]–which lay to the west of Kirkūk. The strikers listened to orations, poems, and reports on the latest developments. The guiding hand of the party was everywhere evident. The culminating point came on July 12 when the police, in an attempt to break up the meetings, fired volleys on the workers, killing at least ten and wounding twenty-seven.[46] The outrage not only added fire to the resentment against al-'Umarī's government but, more significantly, gave point, in the eyes of the strikers, to the Communist argument that the government was the guardian not of the workers but of the oil company. Indeed, many of the workers came, as a result, to regard the Communists as their real friends.

The party now summoned "all patriotic organizations" to united action against the government.[47] But that was really unnecessary: the events themselves were whipping the various parties into a *de facto* political alliance, which became fully evident in August, when another wave of indignation swept the country in the wake of an increase of British troops at Shu'ayab–a move avowedly directed against a Tūdeh–led strike which broke out on July 16 in the 'Abadan oil fields.

The government could not answer except with repression, but repression was helpless in the long run, and had not even then cowed the opposition or broken its will. It only deepened the gulf between the government and the people. Al-‘Umarī had no other alternative but to resign. He did so on November 16.

As often at acute moments, Nūrī as-Sa‘īd returned to the scene. If al-‘Umarī was direct and dealt straightforward blows, Nūrī went tortuously to his ends and seldom did the things he seemed to do. His first act as premier was characteristic. With promises to conduct free elections and unchain political freedoms, he induced the unwary Liberals and National Democrats to join his cabinet.[48] The effect upon the other three parties was precisely that upon which Nūrī had counted. They forgot for the moment their quarrel with the regime and turned their fury–the People’s party to a lesser degree than the others–against their erstwhile allies.

Fahd, for his part, was utterly taken aback. He was, of course, hardly exercised about the conduct of the Liberals, who politically were only a thing of straw. The National Democrats were, however, an altogether different matter: they formed “an important pillar of the general democratic front.” That they should lend their prestige to a government led by Nūrī as-Sa‘īd was far from anything he had expected. He could not suspect opportunism where they were concerned, but he was convinced that they had made a mistake. In his view, the line taken by Nūrī argued more craft than sincerity: the latter did not have the least intention of turning a new leaf or honoring his promises, and availed himself of the cooperation of the National Democrats only to abuse it in his interests.[49]

Beyond this and an open warning as to the danger entailed, Fahd’s criticism of that party did not go. Biting attacks on its leader, Kāmil ach-Chādirchī were–he thought–most inopportune, and “would only drive him into the arms of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd.” Toward the end of November or in early December, he sent urgent word to this effect, by means of Sālim ‘Ubaid an-Nu‘mān, to ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm of the National Union party and to ‘Azīz Sharīf of the People’s party. But, according to our source,[50] both leaders felt that ach-Chādirchī had swung to the right and “ought to be exposed.”

The line pursued by Fahd was probably influenced by a message which he received from a regular party correspondent in Damascus.[51]“My dear

uncle," the message dated December 1, 1946, read,

> . . . I discussed the new situation two days ago with all the brethren[52] here. They take an attitude contrary to that of the managers of the big company[53] and do not believe–as the latter allege–that freedom of commercial intercourse[54] is possible under the existing conditions. . . . The best way, they feel, is to criticize their plans objectively and to refrain from leveling accusations against them, thus keeping their line of retreat continually open.[55]

On December 5–whether before or after the receipt of the quoted message, it is not possible to say–Fahd directed a private appeal to ach-Chādīrchī himself in the name of the Party of National Liberation:[56]

> We were initially bewildered by the participation of your party in the government of Nūrī as-Sa'īd . . . knowing how profound is the cleavage that separates you from a group of people who have worked throughout their political life for the furtherance of imperialist projects. But your public statements have since illumined your motives. . . .
>
> It is our conviction, however, that Nūrī as-Sa'īd intends (from the present interim cabinet) nothing more than the assembling of a parliament with a reactionary majority and the eventual formation of a ministry that would renew the treaty with Britain. . . .
>
> We accordingly suggest that you reconsider the question of your cooperation with this government. . . . You are only endowing it in the eyes of the people and the world public with democratic attributes of which it is entirely innocent. . . . The longer your association with it . . . the greater the ease with which it would achieve its real purposes.[57]

Earlier on November 26, the party in a widely distributed special handbill took pains to point out that "Nūrī as-Saī'd, Ṣāliḥ Jabr,[58] Ṣādiq al-Baṣṣām[59] and their friends,"[60] who formed the real core of the cabinet, were the "very same clique" that had guided the authoritarian Arshad al-'Umarī from behind the scenes and plotted the fall of Suwaidī's liberal government. Therefore, the party added, "the inevitably temporary" understanding

reached between Nūrī on the one hand, and the Liberals and National Democrats on the other, connoted in practice "only a truce from one side–the side of the people and its organizations, and a gain of time for the government and for imperialism." From this the party passed to the conclusion that Nūrī as-Sa'īd's government constituted a danger to the whole national movement, and ended with an appeal for its immediate overthrow.[61]

This handbill brought forth a comment and advice from Syria:

Dear Brother al-Ḥājj[62]

It would have been to greater advantage had you in your handbill concentrated the weight of your attack on British imperialism . . . and for the rest aimed at Nūrī as-Sa'īd alone and refrained from mentioning the others.[63] This is, of course, only a temporary tactic and helps in splitting up enemies and averting their simultaneous combination. Besides, the immediate danger lies in Nūrī's game and his success in forming the government. . . .

The people should not be led, in the manner of the other parties, to attach first importance to the overthrow of cabinets . . . or to nurse the illusion that under imperialism a national democratic government, responsive to their interests, could ever take office . . . . . The clue to the problems of Iraq at this stage is not in the change of cabinets but in British withdrawal and the cancellation of the Treaty. . . .

In brief, national[64] slogans should take precedence over everything else . . . and the point pressed home that imperialism lies at the bottom of all present troubles.[65]

The letter, bearing the date of December 17, was unsigned but penned beyond question by 'Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā'īl, an old Iraqi revolutionary[66] and at this time a member of the Central Committee of the Syrian Communist party.

Before Fahd could act on the advice offered or take any other step, and before the opposition–rejoined since December 26 by the Liberals and National Democrats–could recover from the disarray into which it had been thrown, Nūrī as-Sa'īd quietly struck another blow. On January 18, 1947, the

police suddenly arrested Fahd and his principal associates, thereby inflicting upon the Communist party a deep and living wound, and bringing to an abrupt end another phase of its history.

21

THE ARREST OF FAHD AND AFTER

Fahd and his closest comrade, Zakī Basīm, were apprehended in the afternoon of January 18, 1947, in the house of an apothecary in the Ṣālḥiyyah quarter on the Karkh side of Baghdād, within a stone's throw of the private residence of the minister of interior. Unresisting and placidly resigned, they suffered themselves to be led whether the police pleased.

They were taken to the headquarters of the Investigation Department in Central Baghdād. "On our arrival at about five o'clock," Basīm recounted four months later to the examining magistrate,

> iron fetters were riveted on us and we were flung like dogs into a latrine overflown with filth. . . . At around two after midnight I was let out . . . and conducted before Inspector Nā'il al-Hājj 'Īsa, who at once met me with harsh words and then blurted out an order. On that, six policemen seized me, laid me on the floor, and inserted my feet in the sling of a rifle; an assistant, 'Abd-ur-Razzāq 'Abd-ul-Ghaffūr, reached for a cane and driving it violently, beat me on the soles. I was at the time out of health and in great pain but he took no pity on me. When his hands wearied, two policemen, grasping me under the arms, carried me into a courtyard, and ran me around for a while . . . after which the beating was resumed, Nā'il al-Hājj 'Īsa himself now inflicting the blows. . . . When he left off, he delivered me into the hands of the chief sergeant. "To the tomb of Shaikh Ma'ruf,"[1] he said briefly. I found myself back in the latrine and remained in the foul dampness until seven-thirty in the morning when I asked to see the Chief of Investigations and protested in the name of the law and article 7 of the Constitution[2] against the inhumanities to which we were exposed.[3]

The police preferred to cane first and interrogate after, the object being to unnerve the prisoner and bring him to an "appropriate" frame of mind. But this time the method did not work. Nothing substantial could be wrung out of Zakī Basīm.

Fahd, whose turn had come earlier–at 9:45 of the same night–was as unyielding. He readily admitted that he was the party's secretary general, a fact already known to the authorities, but refused to give his associates away, taking the entire responsibility on himself.

"Who participated with you in reorganizing the Iraqi Communist party in recent years?" the investigating officer asked him.

"The Iraqi Communist party is a secret party; party discipline prohibits me from divulging the name of any of its members or laying bare any of its organizations," Fahd replied.

"Aren't you and your comrades, members of the party, aware that . . . the propagation of Communist ideas is liable to punishment under the Penal Code . . . ?"

"The relevant article 89 a of the Code, . . . is out of accord with the Iraqi Constitution, which has conceded the freedom of belief to every Iraqi citizen."[4]

There were more cross-examinations in the ensuing days, but at length the authorities realized that the captives were of a substance that became the harder the more hammered upon, and had them transferred to the Abī Ghraib military prison.

The cells in which they were deposited were narrow, damp, and without air, and so dark that they soon lost the sense of day and night. One of the basic organizers of the party, ʻAbd-ul-ʼAzīz ʻAbd-ul-Hadī, who had been caught with Fahd and Basīm and committed to the same prison, could not resist the strain and for a time went out of his mind. When, after two weeks, they were let out in the sun for fifteen minutes, the event excited in them a feeling almost of elation.

Later, they were provided with light and with books and newspapers "of the right kind." They were also allowed to exercise daily for half an hour. However, as the months wore on, rigorous confinement gradually wore them away. Repeated petitions by Fahd for their transfer to healthier cells remained unanswered. On June 13, 1947, they declared a hunger strike,

“preferring,” as Fahd subsequently told his judges, “death from hunger to the slow death” to which they had been condemned.[5]

On the eighth day of the strike, the prisoners, now only shadows of themselves, were brought to trial before Iraq’s High Criminal Court. Their case had been heard earlier–in May–by a court of first instance. The manner in which the proceedings were then conducted left some doubt in the public mind as to the disinterestedness of the justiciary and the immaculacy of the justice dispensed: the accused first saw their counsels in court, and one of the counsels, Kāmil Qazanchī (who was destined, twelve years later, to suffer death in Mosul at the hands of Colonel Shawwaf’s followers) was arrested on the charge of advocating communism after making a spirited plea on behalf of the defendants; the other nine attorneys, remonstrating, refused to have anything further to do with the trial.

The higher tribunal was, as regards the forms of law, more correct. Its president spoke with restraint, treated the prisoners with judicial propriety, and listened patiently to what they had to say.

The charges preferred against them were of a grave character: reliance on “foreign sources of income”; contacts with “a foreign state”–the Soviet Union–and with Tūdeh of Iran and “the party of Khālid Bakdāsh”; designs subversive of the constituted order and incitement to armed insurrection; and, most serious of all, the propagation of communism among members of the armed forces.

In support of the first charge, the prosecution pointed to the discrepancy between the humble origins of the accused and their apparent poverty on the one hand, and, on the other hand, “their publishing, in a period of war and high prices, of leaflets, pamphlets, and journals in large quantities.” In his defense, Fahd maintained that the charge rested purely on a supposition and was not backed up by a single material proof. The Communist party depended for its income, he added, on the sales of its paper, *Al-Qā‘idah*, and the contributions of members and sympathizers.

He also flatly denied, as noted elsewhere, that the party had had contacts with the USSR or any of its representatives, casting doubt on the authenticity of a seemingly corroborative letter that had been produced in court but had not been shown to him.[6] The police, he insisted, had had no lack of opportunity to slip in false documents among the seized papers of the party, their search having been effected after his removal from the house

in which his arrest took place–a course in conflict with the rules of law and prejudicial to his interests as an accused.

In regard to the relations between the Iraqi Communists and Communist parties abroad, Fahd said that the public prosecution had yet to prove that these relations were of an organizational nature. No evidence even faintly suggestive of this had been or could be brought forward. The Iraqi Communist party, he affirmed, was independent in its policies, finances, and organizations. He conceded, however, that "Iraqi comrades" residing abroad wrote from time to time to the leadership in Baghdād, volunteering comments on the general party line or on a specific aspect of party activity.[8]

To the counts of subversion and armed insurrection, Fahd pleaded that parties could only be judged on what they did and said, and that there was nothing in the acts, appeals, watchwords, or program of the Iraqi Communists that could be construed as inimical to the institution of the monarchy or to the democratic order defined in the Constitution. A party calling for armed insurrection, he argued, would have at least armed its followers, but there had not been so much as a hint of evidence that arms were found in the possession of the accused or of any Communist.

Upon the count of propagandizing the soldiers–a hanging matter, in the view of the law–Fahd could say nothing that would have weighed in his favor. The evidence was conclusive and could not be controverted.

"Among the names of party members were found the names of soldiers and officers.[9] What do you say to that?" asked the president of the court.

"I am at a loss to understand," Fahd replied, "why I was not questioned on this thing at the time of the preliminary interrogation or before the court of first instance. If in truth, names of soldiers appear in the [captured] papers, I emphatically assert that none of them are members of the Iraqi Communist party. Some of our comrades had been advised by us to get to know good citizens and might well have noted down the names of a number of soldiers. This does not mean, however, that the party or the national movement could make use of all the persons whose names were put upon record."

If the government of the day had no other reason to hang Fahd, the interest he undoubtedly took in the army would have been reason and to spare. The times were difficult; Baghdād writhed in distress; dark clouds warned of an approaching storm; and the men in power, ill at ease, had

resolved upon intimidating the opposition or, at least, setting an example. The judgment was foregone.

On 23 June 1947 the court found Fahd guilty and condemned him to death. Zakī Basīm, his right-hand man, and Ibrahīm Nājī Shmayyel, the apothecary in whose house Fahd had been apprehended, were given the same penalty. Thirteen other Communists were sentenced to varying terms of hard labor.[10]

To the end the authorities remained ignorant of the real party function or significance of most of the accused. The legal punishment was, therefore, in many instances, inappropriate. Two Communists who were merely members of the Diyālah Local Committee,[11] were condemned to servitude for fifteen years, whereas ʻAlī Shukur, an indispensable organizer and a member of the Labor Committee attached to the Central Committee, and Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī, a member of the Politbureau and secretary of the Southern Zone of the party, got only four years. ʻAbd Tamr, another member of the Politbureau, was acquitted.

The protests aroused by the death sentences in neighboring Arab lands and in Europe came somewhat as a surprise to official Baghdād.[12] There were, of course, people from the extreme right who argued that the government in Iraq knew what it was doing. But there were also non-Communists who felt that no authority had the right to take away the life of human beings "simply because they are Communists."[13] Rumors ran about that even "the representatives of the imperialists" had discreetly dropped hints that the execution of the prisoners would be ill advised. On 13 July 1947 the death sentences were commuted, that of Fahd to penal servitude for life, and that of Basīm to the same for fifteen years.[14] One day later, orders came for their removal from the "execution chamber," in which they had been immured since June 23. They were now lodged in the Third Citadel of Baghdād's Central Prison, but not for long. During the night of August 14–15 they were transferred to Kūt, some one hundred and eighty kilometers to the southeast of the capital.[15]

After the dreariness of Abī Ghraib and the Baghdād citadel, the Kūt prison seemed almost a cheerful place. Fahd and Basīm did not live now in solitary cells but in a mass *qāwūsh*,[16] and enjoyed a comparative freedom of movement. The watch kept over them was, to say the least, indifferent. If it were not so, it would be difficult to understand how they were able in a

short time to turn the prison into a veritable Communist school. Never before had so many revolutionaries been brought together under the same roof, and the opportunity was not to be wasted. Past party actions were studied, mistakes analyzed, and lessons drawn. Stress was laid on practical methods of clandestine struggle, but theory was not neglected. Special attention was devoted to inmates who were on short sentences and would soon be released. The party's prison organization quickly flourished and, as defectors later testified, reached a degree of rigor and discipline scarcely attained by the party organizations on the outside.

Before August was over, Fahd had also succeeded in restoring his long-broken contacts with the underground in Baghdād. He wrote his instructions to the party with invisible onion juice, on the back of letters addressed to the family of the prisoner ʻAlī Shukur. To bring out the writing, the recipients simply heated it with the flame of a kerosene lamp. Fahd had previously been able to smuggle out orders on only two occasions–in April and June 1947, and in both instances by means of the wife of the apothecary Nājī Ibrahīm Shmayyel–but his correspondence with the party became now regular and continuous.[17]

When back in January 1947, the news of Fahd's arrest got around, a sense of gloom settled on the party. He had guided all and ruled over all. No sooner had the threads fallen from his hands, than in every rank certainty gave way to doubt, resoluteness to vacillation. Under the spur of fear, some members drew away, others went into hiding. Even the more disciplined strata faltered. Many cells disintegrated. The underground press fell into silence. The party stood still.

However, in measure as it became known that the captives had not weakened under torture, spirits rose and cells gradually came back to life. In February, Yahūda Ṣiddīq, a secondary schoolteacher of Jewish mercantile background[18] and a member of the Central Committee who had escaped arrest, pulled himself together and took the Baghdād party organization in hand. But the shoulders of Ṣiddīq could not carry the mantle of Fahd. He was without political instinct or theoretical resources. More than that, in Iraq in any season and, a *fortiori*, in the critical forties–even if the Palestine problem had not been maturing to a climax–it was scarcely in the interest of the party to have a Jew at the helm. This factor was decisive.

In April or thereabouts from within the prison walls, from Fahd personally, came explicit instructions: send for Comrade Kamal and turn over the responsibility to him.[19]

Comrade Kamāl was the conspirative name of Mālik Saif, another member of the Central Committee[20] and, by common consensus, the most intelligent–but as it later turned out, not the most steadfast–of the secondary leaders of the party. Saif was of the Mandeans or the Ṣubbah, a wary and secretive sect with an intense faith in the vivifying power of flowing water and, in Iraq, numbering no more than six thousand. As many others of his people, Saif descended from a family of silverworkers and was born and raised in ʻAmārah. At one point he taught school in that town, but in 1947 lived in Baṣrah and, while keeping an eye on a bakery, ran the Southern Branch of the party.

Summoned now by Yahūda Ṣiddīq, Mālik Saif moved to Baghdād–but not before initiating and seeing through a strike by the workers at the port. He arrived in the capital at the beginning of June, and put up in a house in the plebeian quarter of Bāb-ish-Shaikh. Ṣiddīq handed over to him the party paper, *Al-Qāʻidah*, which reappeared shortly afterwards, bearing an editorial that Fahd had written in prison.[21]

But Ṣiddīq did not relinquish to Saif the reins of the party, and concealed from him the precise extent of Fahd's instructions. Whenever Saif sought to draw from Ṣiddīq a disclosure of what was going on in the Baghdād underground or in the Kurdish Branch, Ṣiddīq became reserved and vague or simply said: "What good will it do you?" and changed the subject.[22] Worse still, when on July 22, 1947, he had to take to his heels, having been tipped off by a Jewish sergeant in the Investigations Department, he did not leave the party in the charge of Saif but of his brother, Ḥaskail Ṣiddīq, a law student and an inferior Communist.[23] It was only toward the end of August, when Ḥaskail was arrested, that Saif at last assumed command and became effectively the first *masʻūl*,[24] as the on-the-spot leader of the underground was now known. By then a steady connection with the party center in Kūt prison had been established.

The strange behavior of Yahūda Ṣiddīq may perhaps raise questions as to his possible motives. People close to the party later wondered whether he had been a bona fide Communist: Zionist feelings were taking hold of many

Baghdādī Jews at the time. But this is a line which, in the absence of concrete indices, cannot profitably be pursued.

With Fahd now shaping major decisions from behind prison bars and the energetic Mālik Saif in direct day-to-day control–and Saif then served the party as zealously as he subsequently served the police–the Communists recovered their poise and lifted their chins.

In the ensuing months they went from strength to strength. They attracted new followers and harnessed new allies. In September, the rank and file of the factious League of Iraqi Communists, whose chief organizer, Dāūd aṣ-Ṣāyegh, had been captured at about the same time as Fahd, returned unconditionally to the fold. In November, the activists of the People's party, facing suppression, sank their differences with the Communist party and, on its initiative, joined with it and with the Kurdish Democrats[25] and the Progressive Wing of the National Democrats in forming a united front with an executive body, the Cooperation Committee.

On 27 November in a letter from the prison, Fahd indicated the line that was presently to be followed. "Lead the Cooperation Committee," he wrote to Mālik Saif, "and expand its activities, stressing for now the question of bread and democratic freedoms but have care to preserve the independence of our party and afford no opportunity for any interference in its Affairs."[26] Thus, by the early winter of 1947–1948, in the left camp as a whole–even if reservations continued to exist–the spirit of accord had effectively dissipated the spirit of rivalry. The striking power of the Communist party was, as a result, increased several times over. This was a political fact of first importance, for Baghdād was on the eve of great and troublous days: a gigantic storm, that had been slowly gathering momentum, was now relentlessly heading toward the breaking point.

22

AL-WATHBAH

Al-Wathbah–the Leap–was the most formidable mass insurrection in the history of the monarchy. It sprang from the same conditions of existence that had since the first years of the forties been making for the advance of communism.[1] Its aspects were many and diverse. It was the social subsoil of Baghdād in revolt against hunger and unequal burdens. It was the students and Schalchiyyah workers[2] braving machine guns on the Ma‘mūn Bridge and dying for their ideas–or, as cynics would have it, for vain illusions. It was the political representatives of the various layers of the middle class–the National Democrats, the Liberals, the Independence party–resentful of constraints or plotting for political gain. It was the privileged stratum of ex-Sharīfian officer-*mallāks*, bureaucrat-*mallāks*, and *shaikh-mallāks* menaced in their political power and social interests. It was British overlordship shaken, the Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930 sapped, and the Portsmouth Agreement of 1948 abolished. It was the rule of Regent ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh momentarily supplanted by the rule of the demos. It was also the first great test of the Iraqi Communist party.

Iraq had been for some time moving toward the *Wathbah*–the restlessness of the parties, the demonstration of 28 June 1946, the “massacre” at Gāwūrpāghī had been so many prefatory notes or premonitory symptoms–but it was from the moment that the regent and Nūrī as-Sa‘īd proceeded to enmesh their people in another treaty with the English that the Wathbah broke forth.

The old treaty–that of 1930–which virtually reduced Iraq into an appendage of the British Empire,[3] had become something of an anachronism. However, from the point of view of Nūrī and the regent, its annulment was out of the question. Such a course was not only beyond their power, but hardly in accord with their interests. If to many of their subjects,

the treaty seemed like a millstone round their necks, in their own eyes it constituted a protective shield against indigenous revolutions. But with the peoples on the move everywhere in the East, the English, Nūrī, and the regent realized the necessity of redefining, sooner rather than later, their relationships in a manner that, at least in words, would be as inoffensive as possible to national sentiment.

Extending the treaty under the guise of revising it–this is really what, on close examination, the Portsmouth Agreement amounted to–was in any circumstances a risky affair, and markedly the more so when the regent and Nūrī did not have both feet on the ground. In retrospect, it is clear that they had only an insufficient idea of the seriousness of their situation. But they could and did foresee trouble, even though its scale and intensity, when it came, caught them completely by surprise. It was in the hope of averting it or, at least, blunting its edge, that they had, months beforehand, resolved upon an unusual step: in March 1947 Nūrī vacated the premiership, yielding that high office, for the first time since the founding of the monarchy, to a Shī‘ite, that is, to a member of the sect that embraced a clear majority of the population. The Shī‘ite chosen was Ṣāliḥ Jabr.

Jabr had other attributes to commend him, besides Shī‘ism.[4] For one thing, he was a man of no mean ability–a quality which, however, thoroughly failed him at the critical moment. Descending from a poor artisan family of Nāṣiriyyah and beginning life as a petty clerk of the British Revenue Officer in Muntafiq, he rose quickly to responsible posts in the government. Undoubtedly, the protection afforded him by Rustum Haidar, a Shī‘ī and a close adviser of Faiṣal I, helped him a great deal. He also became closely connected with the semifeudal shaikhly stratum through his marriage with the daughter of Shaikh ‘Addāi aj-Jaryān, the chief of Albū Sulṭān, a tribe inhabiting the Ḥillah district. But what perhaps clinched the premiership for him was another factor. Since his days as a clerk at the British Revenue Office in Nāṣiriyyah he had, his adversaries say, realized on which side the bread was buttered. By 1947, at any rate, he had gained the good graces of the English which, as could well be imagined, was much like having gained hold of a political *passe-partout* in monarchic Iraq.[5]

Raising a Shī‘ī to the premiership proved eventually to be of little avail. It meant nothing to the workers without bread, the lawyers without lawsuits,

the forgotten clerks, the students clandestinely propagan dized, and the parties held in leash. It took now only a few incidents to precipitate the thinly disguised, long-seething ferment in which all these elements were caught.

On the 28 December 1947, at the instance of Nūrī and after secret preliminary negotiations with the British government, the regent summoned to the palace a number of senior politicians, including the ex-premiers, to feel them out on the contemplated treaty revision. The leaders of the parties heard of the meeting on the radio or read about it in the morning papers. Nūrī and the regent had not troubled to give them any thought whatever. "The men of the parties," reads a contemporary secret police report,

> wonder why they have not been invited to the Riḥāb Palace . . . and are putting it about that to ignore them in this fashion and in a matter of such gravity goes only to show that the government does not set great store by the parties and intends to revise the Treaty along lines already agreed upon at the time of the last visit of His Excellency Nūrī as-Sa'īd to London.[6]

A few days later–on 3 January 1948–a statement attributed by the "Arab" News Agency (Reuters in Arab skin) to Fāḍil aj-Jamālī, the then foreign minister, provided another stimulus. "Party politics rather than justice," aj-Jamālī reportedly said in London, "were behind much of the criticism levelled in Iraq at the 1930 Treaty, although that instrument is certainly not without flaws. . . . If attacks upon it have continued unabated, a large number of Iraqis have, in the meantime, become sensitive to its merits." The statement was immediately disavowed by the prime minister, but this made no difference. On the night of 4 January, according to a report from the director of investigations to the minister of interior,

> a secret meeting was held at the headquarters of the Independence party. Fāiq as-Sāmarrā'i, Ṣiddīq Shanshal, and Ismā'īl Ghānim, members of the party's Supreme Committee, and the law students 'Adnān Farhād, Muṭā' al-Khuḍarī, Nādir ash-Shaikh Khaz'al, Muṣṭafa al-Wa'iḍh, Mahdī ash-Shams, and Maḥmūd Ḥilmī were present. They talked on the subject of a manifestation . . . and stressed

> the need of going into the streets on the next day at whatever cost, even if it meant using force against the police. Excitement ran high. One of the students, Mahdī ash-Shams, expressed himself ready for any sacrifice, even the assassination of some of the leaders and, at their head, the premier and the foreign minister. But the others opposed him and had at the end, in view of his vehemence, to turn him out of the meeting. The majority resolved upon a demonstration. Ṣiddīq Shanshal dissented.[7]

On the following morning, students from al-Karkh Secondary School took to the streets and, after crossing the river, merged with the students of al-A'ḍhamiyyah, who had also come out. The procession–its banners decrying the statement ascribed to aj-Jamālī–moved peacefully toward the School of Law. From there it expected to advance, with swollen ranks, on the royal palace, its ultimate focal point. But as it approached the Law School, mounted policemen suddenly appeared and barred its way. Law students, who rushed out of their classrooms to join the demonstrators, were driven back, at first with clubs and then with a discharge of firearms. Several of them fell wounded.[8] Thirty-nine others were arrested, and the Law School shut down. The reaction was swift. On 6 January, the students of all the other colleges went on strike. The authorities relented: on the eighth, the apprehended students were released and the Law School reopened.[9] Thus came to an end what might be termed the preliminary phase of the *Wathbah*.

In this first series of incidents, the initiatory role belonged undoubtedly to the Independence party. At the same time, it is beyond question that that party had no idea what it was ushering in. All that it had in mind was a manifestation of narrow scope. Indeed, the manifestation of January 5 could be described in no other way. The strike of the sixth had not been premeditated, and was triggered by the unnecessary violence of the police and the closure of the Law School. In an effective sense, the movement retained throughout this phase a strictly student character. No other social force took part in it. The *Wathbah* had not yet begun in earnest.

Was the Iraqi Communist party sitting with folded arms all this while? The party organ, *Al-Qā'idah,* commenced to advocate the overthrow of the

government of Ṣāliḥ Jabr as early as November 1947. It charged it at that time with conducting negotiations on the revision of the treaty and concealing their substance from the people.[10] In December, it stepped up the attack and, after warning of "the dangers" that lurked in the forthcoming final talks in London, called upon "all honest citizens" to unite in a common struggle for the severance of the treaty ties and the replacement of the Jabr government by a democracy.[11] However, although the party was, as always, intuitive to approaching storm, and in November united the "left" parties under a "Cooperation Committee," its appeals in *Al-Qā'idah* did not thicken in December or earlier into practical preparations for an uprising. There is no evidence in the party records of any such preparations. This is corroborated by the testimony of Mālik Saif, the then first mas'ūl[12] of the party, and who had since defected.[13] It was, in fact, the unexpected initiative of the Independence party that coaxed the Communists into life. Their student cells were quickly set in motion and contributed actively to the events of January 5–7. As is clear from the party registers captured ten months later, six of the students arrested for leading roles in the events referred to were members of the Communist party or of its auxiliary, the National Liberation party.[14]

From 8 to 15 January, the Baghdād of the opposition paused, so to say. On the surface it looked as if the spirit of protest had dissolved. But the calm was deceptive. An acute and tense watchfulness prevailed. All eyes were riveted on London, whether an official delegation headed by Jabr and including Nūrī had gone for final negotiations and the signature of a new treaty. The Communists, for their part, were not exactly marking time. A letter had come from Kūt prison, in which Fahd vigorously demanded that the party make serious preparation to send its forces into the street. A hasty mobilization of the party's means began. An adjunct of the "Cooperation Committee," the "Student Cooperation Committee," came into being. Kāmil Qazanchī, a Mosul lawyer, a friend of the Communists, an orator of great power, and the head of the "Cooperation Committee" since November, was earmarked to lead the demonstrations, which were now only a few days away.[15]

The surface stillness broke abruptly with the announcement on 16 January of the terms of the treaty signed the day before at Portsmouth. Although abundantly oiled over with the idioms of mutuality, the new

agreement committed Iraqis to "*a* firm alliance" with Britain, to policies in foreign lands congruent with its interests,[16] and to the recognition of Iraq's air bases as links in its "essential" communications.[17] The agreement also pledged Iraq to "invite" British forces to its territory in time of war or of a threat of war, and to furnish them with assistance and sundry facilities,[18] and, further, to permit the continued use of the Shu'aybah and the Ḥabbāniyyah bases by the R.A.F. until the withdrawal of the "allied armies" from "all ex-enemy countries."[19] In the conditions of the then unfolding "Cold War," such a withdrawal was scarcely in view and, indeed, in the case of Germany, has not come about to this very day. In brief, the Portsmouth Agreement was–except for relatively minor points–little more than the 1930 Treaty with a coating of new-fashioned terminology.[20] Its gloss of mutuality carried as much conviction as the remark made months before by Ernest Bevin, the secretary of state for foreign Affairs. Britain regarded Iraq as "a member of the family," he had said, tongue in cheek.[21]

The publication of the agreement sparked a three-day strike and continuous demonstrations by college students. The movement bore from the beginning a grim earnestness, and developed with unaccustomed force. Behind the seething students, stimulating them, urging them on, welding them together, was the Communist-led "Student Cooperation Committee," On 16, 17, and 18 January, not only the Communists and their confederates–the Progressive Democrats, the Populists, and the Kurdish Democrats, but also students from the National Democratic and Independence parties, worked with the Committee and followed its lead. On the nineteenth, however, the Independence party, which stood farthest to the right, ordered its student elements to separate themselves from the Committee and bide their time.[22] The National Democrats held on, and to the end would play a role by no means inconspicuous. However, from this point, the Communists emerged unmistakably as the fundamental force of the *Wathbah*, with the "Cooperation Committee" and the "Student Cooperation Committee" as their chief levers. The stormy mass march of 20 January, in which for the first time the Schalchiyyah workers and the hungry *shargāwiyyas*[23] took part, was a distinctly Communist initiative. Blood was shed that day in Baghdād. In a vain attempt to disperse the demonstrators, the police, losing its senses or acting under instructions, fired murderously into their midst. Lead, however, did not dissipate

resistance. The multitudes became only bitter and more defiant. On the succeeding day passions rose higher. Student delegations who wanted to escort the bodies of some of the victims to their final resting place were fired upon by the police inside the Royal Hospital. Two fell dead and seventeen others were wounded. One of the pharmacy students, whose brains were blown out by a bullet, was carried by his companions to the dean of his school who, shuddering in horror, submitted his resignation. The faculties of Pharmacy and Medicine and the physicians at the hospital followed his example. As word of the outrage spread, resentment mounted to a fever heat. Tempestuous protests pervaded the streets. Crowds, thick with Communists, and armed with huge canes, clashed with the police, who became much like aidless flotsam in a wrathful sea. An atmosphere redolent of social revolution enveloped Baghdād. The regent, overtaken by happenings more authoritarian than himself, took fright. Unsure of the army, he effected an about-face: in the night of January 21, after summoning a palace council, to which this time he invited the representatives of the parties, he openly disowned the treaty.[24]

The regent's change of front had the immediate effect of splitting the opposition. The Independence party, which had recommitted its forces on 21 January, now held back again. It pronounced itself emphatically against any further display of feeling. "His Highness and loyal personages must be given time to deal with the situation," ran a statement issued in its name.[25] The National Democrats could not help noting that while the treaty had been laid aside, the government that signed it continued in office. They enjoined the people to remain on their guard, but counseled no action.[26] The Communists set themselves determinedly against any decrease in the movement. The overthrow of the Jabr cabinet was now within arm's reach; a letup in mass pressure would be tantamount to renouncing victory, they argued. From their point of view, the only sane course was to sharpen the agitation and push it through to the end.[27] The declaration of Jabr from London on 22 January, in which he dismissed the movement as the work of a few seditionists, played into their hands.

On the twenty-third, enormous crowds, roused by Communists, streamed through Baghdād's main arteries. They met with no resistance. The uniformed police had disappeared, but not the secret agents of the

Investigations, who left us an authentic, if perhaps pruned, account of what happened:

> A number of Communist students . . . assembled this morning in the square in front of the School of Medicine. About seventy of them left at once, in separate groups, heading for al-Muaḍhḍham Gate. There they began inciting the people to demonstrate. In the meantime, in the square itself, the congregating students increased to about 350. . . and, forming in ranks, now marched toward the aforesaid gate, shouting "Down with the Government of Ṣāliḥ Jabr!" "Down with Nūrī as-Sa'īd!" "We are for a People's Revolution!" "Long Live the Unity of the Workers and the Students!" In measure as they advanced, great numbers of workers and some women adhered to them. When they reached the brass founders' market, Muḥammed Ṣāliḥ Baḥr-ul-'Ulūm[28] excitedly addressed them and wrought them up to vehement passion. . . . They next halted before the head-auarters of the Investigations, and swinging Baḥr-ul-'Ulūm and Kāmil Qazanchī[29] to their shoulders, shouted "Down with Black Bread!" "Provide Bread to the People!" "Down with the Investi gations!""Ṣāliḥ Jabr, Nūrī as-Sa'īd, Bahjat Aṭiyyah[30] to the Gallows !" . . . When they arrived at King Faiṣal's Square, Kāmil Qazanchī leapt to the roof of the Wādī Coffeehouse and made a speech. Catching sight of about thirty onlooking soldiers, he loudly hailed the "brave army" with the obvious intent of sowing discord between the military and the police. . . . Then, pointing to the workers, he cried: "We want a people's government representing these classes.". . . After that, the procession moved on. As it made toward the Eastern Gate, a number of Istiqlālis[31] appeared and began distributing the statement of their party.[32] Demonstrating workers at once fell upon them, beat them up and, snatching the leaflets from their hands, tore them to pieces. . . . In front of the petrol station, where the procession again halted, the throngs–after listening to another inflammatory speech by Baḥr-ul-'Ulūm–broke into "Long Live the National Liberation Party!"[33] "Long Live the People's Struggle!" "Long Live the Communist Party!" . . . Here some Istiqlālis raised their voices crying out: "Hi! you people! These are all Communists! Leave their ranks! Do not let them lead you astray! They

> are determined to sell the Kingdom to the Russians!" About a third of the crowd withdrew, while the others resumed their march, their cries rolling forth. At length they came to the precincts of the Sa'dūns[34] statue. "Release the Leader Fahd!" "Release the Lions of Kūt!"[35]. . . "Long Live the Republic!" they shouted. When their voices died down, Kāmil Qazanchī sprang up on the plinth of the statue and made them swear "in the name of God the Great and upon the anniversary of the birth of the Prophet Muḥammad, the youth of the beloved King, and the wisdom of the exalted Regent, and in the name of the People, the Motherland, and upon the blood of the Martyrs" to continue the struggle until the demands of the people[36] are met. . . . "Long Live the Protector of the People!" the crowds cried. "Pardon! Pardon! I am only the servant of the People!" Qazanchī answered.
>
> Arkady Suvorov, the secretary of the Russian Legation, was seen wandering in the street in his car and inquiring about the demonstrations. At around two o'clock in the afternoon he came to the Tigris Pharmacy in the Ḥaidarkhānah quarter and asked Zokian, its proprietor and the head of the Armenian Migration Committee, for more details.[37]

Shouts of "Long Live the Republic!" had not been planned. In its circular of 22 January, the party had warned against "unauthorized cries," and enjoined members to be on the lookout for "provocateurs" who would "contort" the demonstration from its determined aims.[38] The tactic of the day was to split the regent from the English, Nūrī, and Jabr. To call the monarchy into question was, therefore, inexpedient, if not injurious.

Baghdād was still in an agitated state on 26 January, when Jabr and Nūrī returned from London. Both had not yet given up hope of salvaging the treaty. In Nūrī's view, there was only one way in which to meet insurgent crowds–put them down. The "dignity of the government" had to be restored, whatever the cost. Jabr, for his part, was firmly convinced that he could handle the situation. The regent, allowing himself to be persuaded, wheeled about once again. In consequence, at 10:15 that night Jabr broadcast a statement in which he appealed for calm, and affirmed that the nation would shortly have a detailed explanation of the clauses of the treaty and could then say its final word on it. The statement acted as a signal.

Active masses of people immediately took to the streets. Denunciatory cries soon resounded deafeningly through the air. Not long after, at around midnight, came the rattle of machine guns. The Baghdādis who stayed at home could hear the echoes in the distance, and spent the remaining hours of the night wondering what the morrow had in its womb.

In the morning Baghdād looked more like a field of battle than a city. There had been more than a vague presentiment that decisive things were about to happen, and rulers and ruled had made their preparations.

The first event of that climactic day was the release of a manifesto by the Central Committee of the Communist party. The manifesto began by denying "tendencious allegations" that the government, in its flurry of alarm, had been widely propagating: "There is no danger of 'civil war' or of 'a Communist revolution' or of other such prattle. . . . The real danger lies in foreign interference in the affairs of our country."

The manifesto went on to affirm that "hired agents of the Investigations and of the imperialists" had been insinuating themselves into the demonstrations and sending up "extremist and imbecile shouts" to provide the government with excuses against the people. It wound up with an appeal to the citizenry to continue the struggle arm in arm until the defeat of the Portsmouth Treaty, the overthrow of the Jabr cabinet, and the formation of "a national democratic government. "[39]

Even as the manifesto was being distributed, dense crowds of students and youthful workmen, brandishing canes, were pouring from various parts of ar-Raṣāfah–East Baghdād–and from the northern suburb of al-A'ḍhamiyyah toward the Ma'mūn Bridge (see Map 4). Their immediate object was to cross over into al-Karkh–West Baghdād–and join forces with the students of the right bank and the Schalchiyyah railway workers, who were simultaneously moving in the direction of as-Suwaidī Square at the western entrance of the bridge. The forces of the police were also going into action. They quickly occupied key points in the streets and on the roofs of houses and khans, and the minaret of al-Murādiyyah mosque.[40] They had strict orders to turn back and break up the demonstrations and, if necessary, shoot to kill.

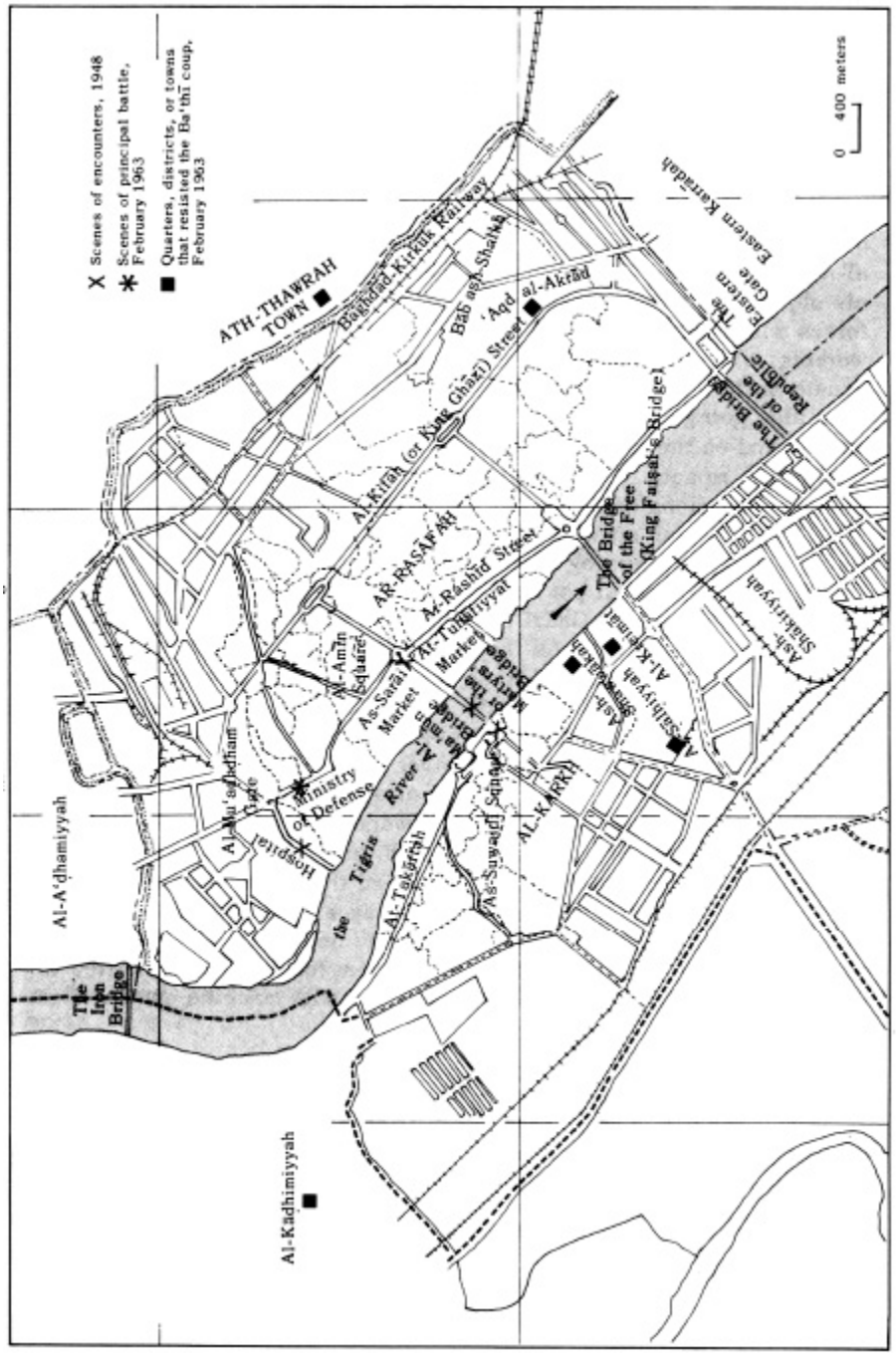
The first clash occurred in ar-Raṣāfah near the Royal Hospital, where crowds, comprising Communists, if not led by them, were fired on. They lost four dead but put to flames an armored car[41] and, forcing the police to

withdraw into Ghāzī Street, streamed into ar-Rashīd, Baghdād's main thoroughfare. As they pushed on, new groups clung to them. When, however, they reached Amīn Square, some four hundred meters from the eastern end of the Ma'mūn Bridge, they ran into strong police reinforcements which, for a while, succeeded in pinning them down.

At about the same time, on the other side of the river, parts of the Karkh crowds, reckless of life, thrust away an armed police force that had been disputing their passage and swarmed onto the fifty-foot-wide bridge, intent upon effecting a union with their comrades in ar-Raṣāfah. But their forward ranks had scarcely gained the left bank when suddenly a pitiless fire was let loose upon them by armored car detachments that had rushed from the markets of as-Sarāi and at-Tuḥāfiyyāt. Several were instantly killed or wounded. The others turned round and tried to regain the opposite bank, but were spattered with machine-gun fire from the top of a khan in as-Suwaidl Square. The bleeding of the crowd was terrible. Bodies lay all over. Some were entangled in the iron of the bridge. Others had dropped into the river below and were carried along by the current.

MAP 4

Sketch of Baghdād



More blood was yet to flow. The demonstrators that had been halted in Amīn Square became now uncontrollable. The police force that had contained them pulled back and withdrew at a run in the direction of the bridge. There the detachments that had just dealt destruction to the Karkh crowds were waiting with their armored cars and machine guns. The demonstrators advanced, seemingly determined to cross in spite of any

losses. For an instant the police, losing some of their assurance, hesitated. A few minutes later, however, a volley of shots burst forth. Only a fifteen-year-old girl, ʻAdawiyyah al-Falakī, who carried a banner and marched at the head of the column, crossed unscathed. Her four immediate companions and others behind them had fallen. The firing had ceased. The bridge now echoed only with murmurs of pain and cries of grief.

Apparently appalled at the extent of loss of life and noticing that, far from dispersing, the crowds on both sides of the bridge were beginning to reform, having recovered from their stupefaction, the police withdrew completely from the scene.

How many fell that day cannot be determined. Numerous bodies were buried without being registered. Others drifted down the Tigris. The total figure for dead and injured is commonly set at between three and four hundred.[42]

The sequel is already known. Late that evening Premier Ṣāliḥ Jabr fled for his life to the Euphrates, and eventually to England. The regent charged Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr, a Shīʻī *sayyid* and man of religion, and a leader of the 1920 uprising,[43] with forming a new government.

Months later, the Ministry of Interior was seeking for an alien hand in the events just described. “Information reaching us,” the ministry wrote to the Directorate General of Police in December 1948, “indicates that the Saʻūdī and Russian Legations had had a part in initiating the demonstrations.” Could any light be shed upon this matter? “The Saʻūdī Legation,” the directorate replied, “was in touch with some of the members of the Independence party during the days of the *Wathbah* and, as rumors had it then, supplied them with funds and light arms and incited them to demonstrate.” In regard to the Russians, the directorate only brought out that their legation had been reportedly visited at that time by Krikor Badrossian,[44] the secretary of the Armenian Branch and a member of the Central Committee of the Communist party.

In the same letter, the Ministry of Interior noted that in the “days of January” numerous lorries transported women, students, and workers to the scene of the demonstrations from outlying districts and from the provinces. “Who furnished those lorries . . . and how were those people provided for, when it was so difficult for nonresidents to find food in Baghdād and

especially bread?" the ministry wondered. The movement from the provinces was organized by the Communist party, the directorate said. The people coming from the south used the railroad and transferred to lorries at the station. The travel costs were defrayed by the provincial party mas'ūls,[45] who led the "delegations" and who, when in need, turned to Hādī 'Abd-ir-Riḍā, a liaisonman of the Communist party center. The expenses were met, the directorate added, "from contributions, amounting at times to about five hundred dīnārs[46] monthly and collected from Jewish merchants by the Jewish Communists Ibrahīm Sha'ūl, Mīr Ya'qūb Cohen, and Sayyūn al-Bazzāz."[47]

However, the party's summary of accounts, which fell into the hands of the police, indicates that relatively insignificant amounts were spent by the party in the month of the *Wathbah* and the succeeding month.[48]

PARTY'S RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1948[49]

Month	*Receipts*	*Expenditure*
January	168 dīnārs 995 fils	89 dīnārs 150 fils
February	308 dīnārs 971 fils	205 dīnārs 855 fils

The political weight of the party was obviously out of all proportion to its financial resources.

The *Wathbah* gave the party a strong thrust forward. Its appeal widened and its following grew apace. The trained cadre, however, was in a comparative sense too thin to cope organizationally with the flow into the party's ranks. One hundred and twenty-five seasoned Communists–Fahd's own trainees in many instances–lay in the prison of Kūt[50] and could not be easily replaced. As a result, the quality of the members palpably declined. Not unrelated to this state of affairs was the curious tendency in the months after the *Wathbah* toward the commingling of the Communist party with its auxiliary, the National Liberation party, which led to the clouding if not "the breakdown of membership standards," as an internal party critique later put it.[51] The fusion with the Communists on 19 March 1948 of the National Revolutionary Committee, an organization diminutive in respect of numbers but weighted on the leadership side,[52] brought only a slight improvement. The party, however, gained a new mouthpiece, the Committee's legal paper, *Al-Asās* (The Base).[53]

Perhaps a greater degree of attention would have been given to the qualitative weaknesses in the party had the pressure of external events been less severe, but to some extent the neglect of this problem could be laid to the disharmony that reigned for some time at the highest level of the party. Yahūda Ṣiddīq, a member of the Central Committee, who had gone into hiding in Kirkūk in July 1947, returned to Baghdād in March 1948 and proceeded to pick a quarrel with Mālik Saif on the matter of leadership. He doubted Saif's capacity, disputed his right to continue in command, and ended by insisting on the Kurdish Branch of the party being placed exclusively under his supervision. Both eventually appealed to Fahd, who settled the issue in Saif's favor. "A year ago," Fahd wrote to Yahuda Ṣiddīq on 17 May,

> We asked . . . that responsibility be turned over to Kamāl.[54] Why did we do this? Because we discerned in him the needed political maturity and the other attributes which qualify him to lead the movement in the existing circumstances. Time has justified us in our choice. . . . What he did and is doing, was done and is being done with our knowledge. . . .

TABLE 22-1

Fahd's Fourth Central Committee (August 1947 to 12 October 1948)

Name	*Nation and religion*	*Date and place of birth*	*Profession*
Full Members			
Mālik Saif[a]	(See Table 19-3)		
Yahūda Ṣiddīq	(See Table 19-3)		
Aḥmad 'Abbās ('Abd Tamr)	(See Table 19-2)		
Krikor Agop Badrossian	(See Table 19-3)		
Sāmi Nādir Muṣṭafa	(See Table 14-2)		
Ismā'īl Aḥmad	(See Table 19-3)		
Nāfi' Yūnis[c]	Kurd, Sunnī	1924, Arbīl	Lawyer
Jāsim Ḥammūdī[c]	Arab, Sunnī	1922, Baṣrah	Secondary schoolteacher
Candidate Members			
Mūsa Muḥammad Nūr	(See Table 19-3)		
'Abd-ur-Razzāq Maṭar[c]	Arab, Shī'ī	1920, Najaf	Engineering student
'Abd-us-Salām an-Nāṣirī[c]	Arab, Shī'ī	1924, Baṣrah	Clerk at the port
Yūsuf Ḥannā[c]	Assyrian, Christian	1922, Shaqlāwah[d]	Ex-elementary schoolteacher; weaver

Education	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*	*Subsequent history*
School of Law, Baghdād	Lower middle class	1945 (21)[b]	Member of Central Committee 1961-1963; killed 1963
Higher Teachers' College	Lower middle class	1945 (23)	Left party
School of Engineering	Lower middle class	? (?)	
Secondary	Lower middle class	1945 (21)	In prison 1948-1958; member of Central Committee 1958 to present
Secondary	Lower middle class	1946 (24)	

[a]Saif was the First *Mas'ūl*, i.e., comrade-in-charge.
[b]Formerly member of Shursh.
[c]Co-opted in May 1948 on instructions from Fahd.
[d]town in Arbll province.

It appears from your report that you desire to split the responsibility in the party and carve out spheres of influence. . . . But it rests upon every one of us to realize that the party, in all its component branches and organizations, constitutes an integral whole.[55]

One other development in the sphere of inner party life in this period must be pointed out: the reorganization in May of the Central Committee, five new members and candidate members being coopted on Fahd's direct instructions from the prison of Kūt[56] (consult Table 22-1).

The *Wathbah* left its imprint also on the policy of the party. In general, it made for a greater radicalism of attitude. But in this regard the party was also influenced by the line taken by the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' parties, which had been founded at a meeting held in Poland in September 1947. This perhaps explains why the party inclined to the left pronouncedly more in its theoretical formulas than in its actual tactics.

Theoretically, the perspective of the party, as defined in an internal statement circulated in February 1948, was that of "a democratic bourgeois revolution" under "the leadership of the proletariat." The underlying postulates were uncompromisingly anti-imperialist, antifeudalist, and–this was a new note–antibourgeois. On this view, the Iraqi "national bourgeoisie" was "weak politically and economically," and "being apprehensive" of "the growing over of the democratic into the socialist revolution," "disposed to come to terms with the imperialists at the expense of the masses."[57] However, a document drawn in the following summer for the guidance of the members of the Central Committee reformulated the general position of the party in the terms indicated below:

Leadership	in alliance with (natural partners)	against
The workers	*all* the peasants	imperialism and the big landowners

paralyze	for
the wavering bourgeoisie	national liberation and a People's Democracy[58]

Interestingly enough, the party's earlier formulations–those of February–appear to reflect the radical views of the Yugoslavs who, at the time, had an active role in the Information Bureau. Proceeding from the premise of the growth of the bourgeois into the socialist revolution, the Yugoslavs stood for an out-and-out antibourgeois orientation in the colonies.[59] This standpoint differed from that of E. Zhukov, the foremost Soviet specialist on Asia, who drew a distinction between "the big national bourgeoisie" and "the small and middle bourgeoisie," attributing the "betrayal of national interests" only to the former, while reserving for the latter "in many countries of the East" a place within the anti-imperialist coalition led by the

Communist parties and “uniting . . . the proletariat, the peasants . . . , and the other strata of the workers.”[60]

The later formulations of the Iraqi party–those of the summer of 1948–clearly diverged from the postulates of the Yugoslavs without, however, coinciding with those of Zhukov. Of course, by that time the Yugoslavs had fallen out with the Communist camp. The revolutionary tide, climactically expressed in the *Wathbah*, had also ebbed away.

Was there any parallelism between theory and the actual course steered by the party?

In the period extending from 27 January–the culminating point of the *Wathbah-to* the early summer of 1948, that is, roughly during the term of office of the government of Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr,[61] protests, meetings, marches, and demonstrations, initiated by the party, attained, in regard to extent and vigor, unheard-of proportions. Strikes were declared in the railways on March 18, April 14, and May 12, and at the port on April 4 and 6, and May 2 and 18. The important K3 oil pumping station was paralyzed from April 23 to May 15, and its workers led in a 250-kilometer *masīrah*[62] on Baghdād–an Iraqi variant on a diminutive scale of the Chinese epic of the Long March. Party activity was no less intense among the students. In February, Communist student societies literally ran the Teachers ‘Training and Engineering Colleges and other schools in which they were strongly entrenched. Deans and professors were then heard to complain of a “government by students” and of collegial “anarchy.”[63] In April, the party assembled the first national student congress and created the General Union of Iraqi Students, which gave it added leverage over the schools and colleges. It was also in this period that the revolt of the villagers of ‘Arbat, sparked by the party, came to a head.[64]

All this was wholly in the spirit of Fahd’s insistent urgings from the prison. The government of aṣ-Ṣadr which, apart from the leader of the rightist Independence party and a few inconsequential or politically indistinctive members, embraced representatives of the old powers of society, never found favor with Fahd. Later the “Committee of Arab Democrats in Paris,”[65] headed by Yūsuf Ismā‘īl, a denationalized Iraqi and a member of the French Communist party,[66] would brand aṣ-Ṣadr “ange gardien mais agent camouflé de Timperialisme britannique.”[67] Even then the disguise was, in the view of Fahd, only too thin. The Ṣadr government,

he felt, had no other role but soaping the rope for those who would strangle the *Wathbah* and negate its results. “The object of this government,” he wrote to the first *mas‘ūl* early in February,

> is not to bring about a fundamental change concordant with the demands of the masses but to calm the people and return the waters to the old beds, that is, in effect to afford the imperialists and their hangers-on enough time to weave plots . . . and regain control. . . . Keep your eyes open, therefore, and guard against whatever could steal away the gains of the people. . . . The masses must be mobilized and urged on to demonstrate, form delegations, tender petitions, and press for . . . the abolition of the 1930 Treaty, . . . the evacuation of foreign troops, the unshackling of democratic freedoms, . . . the provision of decent bread to the people . . . and the punishment of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, the ranking imperialist agent.[68]

One slogan had to be advanced with insistence: the release of the political prisoners.[69] Events were too much for the secondary leaders of the party. From the point of view of Fahd, it was indispensable that its authoritative guiding layer should be at large.

Fahd did not toss the “national bourgeoisie” over into the imperialist camp. On the contrary, he instructed the first *mas‘ūl* to push for a government consisting of Liberals and National Democrats, or of members of these parties and other “clean and patriotic elements.”[70] The leadership of the Liberals–a group of merely episodic significance-was, like that of the National Democrats, drawn from the middle and upper bourgeoisie.[71]

More than that, Fahd recommended that “the unity of ranks in the national movement” be safeguarded. “No partial difference,” he adjured, “should be allowed to develop into a total difference, that is, disagreement on some points should not lead to a rupture of relations. It is necessary to turn to account all patriotic elements, whatever their social inclinations, that are willing to come along even if half of the way.”[72]

Obviously Fahd’s instructions ran counter to the party’s theoretical formulations of February 1 and to the Yugoslav postulates upon which the formulations were based. Of course, there is no inconsistency, from the standpoint of pure Bolshevik doctrine, in cooperating politically with the

bourgeoisie while at the same time attacking it ideologically. But here it is a question of conflicting ideological characterizations. In the one case, some elements not only of the middle but also of the upper bourgeoisie are viewed as “clean” and “patriotic.” In the other case, the entire bourgeoisie is lumped together with imperialism and feudal power. Be that as it may, the party acted as Fahd desired. The theoretical formulations simply dropped out of sight.

However, although Fahd would subsequently dwell more than once on the need of strengthening relations with the Liberals and National Democrats,[73] no advance whatever could be achieved along this line. After the triumph of the *Wathbah*, the two parties gave the Communists the cold shoulder. Their informal collaboration in the days of January had merely reflected a transitional coincidence of interests. The Liberals and National Democrats now set themselves unambiguously against any breach of “tranquility.” They did not, however, support the government of aṣ-Ṣadr. They did not oppose it, either. They pressed by purely literary means for genuine elections and wider constitutional and party liberties, among other things.[74] Otherwise, they confined themselves to a basically “wait and see” attitude.

Hardly less disconcerting, from Fahd’s viewpoint, was the decomposition into its constituent elements of the political front which had found expression in the Cooperation Committee. Under unremitting constraint, the Progressive National Democrats, the Kurdish Democrats, the People’s party, and the Communists tended to coalesce. But with the first breaths of freedom, the old spirit of rivalry reasserted itself. “If the leaders of these parties . . . refuse to work with you,” Fahd wrote to the first *mas‘ūl* on 19 March, “do not neglect their followers.”[75] But the tactic of united front from below was in the new circumstances as unavailing as the tactic of united front from above.

The party suffered infinitely less from these failures than from the stand it abruptly took on the question of Palestine on July 6. Its leaders realized fully enough that in backing the partition of that country, they were acting against the whole logic of their internal situation, in other words, along a line that was self-damaging to the extreme, but they had no choice.[76] The decision, to be sure, gravely compromised the Communists in the eyes of

the popular mass, deepened the gulf between them and nationalists of all shades, and brought terrible confusion into the party's own ranks.

The old powers of society were not retarded in taking advantage of the turn of events, and began by bending to their own purposes the martial law that had been imposed on May 15 in connection with the outbreak of the war in Palestine. They pulled up the reins on the entire opposition, but came down with special force on the Communists and their traveling companions. Before long, Nūrī as-Sa'īd reentered political life, which in effect meant that the interlude of freedom had run its course. In other words, the only positive conquest of the *Wathbah* had been dissipated.

It is against this background–one of ebb and isolation insofar as the Communists were concerned–that the party's theoretical revaluation of the summer of 1948 has to be viewed. By that time the party was, of course, no longer capable of revolutionary initiative. The revaluation was, therefore, of a purely academic character.

23

THE DISASTER; THE DEATH OF FAHD ON THE GALLOWS; THE "CHILDREN COMMUNISTS"

In the last months of 1948, the party seemed to be crumbling to dust. Its center was disrupted. Its best organizers and agitators were captured and thrown into prison. Hundreds of nuclei of Communist students and workers were discovered and broken up. Hastily reformed cells were wrecked before they could be steadied. The underground printing press was swept away. The party's registers and piles of correspondence in cipher were seized. All the secrets became known. An anguished sense of disintegration settled upon the remnants of Communists. Some of them left the country, others wavered in their purpose or lost their nerve and deserted the ranks. Many people talked of the party as if it was a thing of the past.

The misfortunes of the Communists began when ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq, an ex-candidate member of the Central Committee,[1] turned informer and divulged to the authorities the address of the party headquarters: house no. 17/166 in the Haitāwīn quarter of Baghdād. This occurred on 9 October 1948. Three days later, the police raided the house and arrested Mālik Saif, the first *masʻūl;* Yahūda Ṣiddīq, his predecessor; Jāṣim Ḥammūdī, a member of the Central Committee;[2] and a number of other revolutionaries.

Why ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq, whose family, incidentally, had in the past rendered invaluable services to the Communists, chose the path of betrayal cannot be unerringly established. On one view, he was consumptive and in low spirits at the time, and had tired of living in holes and hideaways.[3] On another view, he bore a grudge against the party: back in 1946 Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī, a member of the Politbureau,[4] had befriended ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq's sister but had refused to marry her.[5] Fahd, who on principle and for security reasons, frowned upon any kind of intimacy with

the opposite sex, had suspended ash-Shabībī from all his functions. But this, it seems, had not entirely reconciled ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq. Obviously neither of the interpretations set upon his motives contradicts the other.

For many months ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq had not been deep enough in the confidence of the party. His information was, therefore, out of date. He told the police that Yahūda Ṣiddīq was the Communist that mattered. Various means of compulsion were used to persuade Ṣiddīq to talk, but for twenty-eight days he kept a dogged silence. On 11 November, however, he broke down and disclosed that the real first *masʻūl* was Mālik Saif. Confronted with the disclosure, Saif, his courage all gone out of him, made a full revelation and supplied the police with all the evidence they needed against the party. Indeed, from this point on, to save his own skin he set himself to work the will of the authorities and the ruin of his followers.

The defection of Mālik Saif was the starting point of a wide and thorough search that ultimately enmeshed hundreds of Communists. It also led to the summary retrial of the foremost leaders of the party.

On 10 February 1949, Fahd and two members of his Politbureau, Zakī Basīm and Muḥammad Ḥusain ash-Shabībī, were brought before a quasi drumhead court martial, convicted of the charge of having led the party from the prison, and condemned to be hanged by the neck till dead.

The sentences were carried out at daybreak on 14 and 15 February. The three leaders were strung up in different squares of Baghdād city, ash-Shabībī at the gate of al-Muʻaḍhḍham, Basīm at the east gate, and Fahd in al-Karkh in the open space that is now called the Square of the New Museum. Their bodies were left hanging for several hours so that the common people going to their work would receive the warning. Cheap notices posted close by depicted the offense for which they died. When the authorities permitted, Basīm and ash-Shabībī were delivered to their next of kin. Fahd was buried by the police at an unknown hour in an unmarked grave in the common corner of al-Muʻaḍhḍham cemetery.[6]

Moments before the close of his life, as he was being led up to the gallows, Fahd is said to have exclaimed in a defiant tone: “A people that offers sacrifices will not die!. . . Communism is stronger than death!” This is how the organ of the Communist prison organization reported it in 1954.[7] Five years later, the mouthpiece of the Central Committee maintained that

in those final moments Fahd also said: “We are bodies and thoughts; if you destroy our bodies, you will not destroy our thoughts.”[8] Back in 1949, in the day after the hangings, the smith of the prison passed it about that shortly before the execution, as he was binding Fahd’s feet with iron, Fahd asked if he could put him a question. On the smith’s nod of assent, Fahd enquired whether there had been any demonstration in the streets that day or in the days before. “No!” the smith answered. After that Fahd relapsed into silence.[9] This last account is perhaps the only one that accords with the facts.

The destruction of the Communist leaders provoked comments from Arkady Suvorov, the secretary of the Soviet legation, which the ubiquitous agents of the police have preserved for us. “Does Nūrī as-Sa‘īd or the ruling class,” said Suvorov to some of his visitors, “think that the hanging of these men or of others will put an end to the Communist movement in Iraq? They are only being foolish. . . . They may now shatter the party and incarcerate thousands of its members . . . but this will not avail them for long. The rotten state of things will of necessity rouse the people and not only the Communists to protests and eventually to revolution.”[10]

On the whole Suvorov was, of course, correct: the happenings of the fifties would corroborate his judgment. To what he said we should add that Fahd dead proved more potent than Fahd living. Communism became now surrounded with the halo of martyrdom.

In the meantime, as police blow succeeded police blow, and party unit after party unit disintegrated, confusion reigned in the underground. Recurring rumors that the party was riddled with spies or that wreckers had insinuated themselves into the highest ranks were especially demoralizing. More serious was the slipping into sensitive party posts of accidental or inexperienced figures. For a number of weeks in November 1948 a twenty-year-old-petty clerk by the name of Ṣabrī ‘Abd-ul-Karīm bluffed his way to the top leadership of the party by pretending to be the agent of an authorized first *mas‘ūl* who answered, he said, to the conspirative pseudonym of “Comrade ‘Alī” but was, in fact, the product of his own fancy. No less significant was the tendency for children and youngsters to swamp the party as more and more grown-ups vanished into the state prisons or abandoned the fight. Indeed, insofar as the bulk of the party

members were concerned, the period under dis-cussion-the last months of 1948 and the first half of 1949-may not inappropriately be termed the period of the “Children Communists” or of the “Teenaged Communists. Many, if not most, of the primary party organizations were then led by boys aged thirteen to seventeen.[11] In the same months eleven of the *mas‘ūls* of provinces and twenty-nine other members of the local party committees were younglings fifteen to twenty years old. A similar state of affairs prevailed in the Baghdād organization.[12] Even the first *mas‘ūls* of the period were–but for one exception–only twenty-one or twenty-two years of age (consult Table 23-1).

Neither the Central Committees that these first *mas‘ūls* formed nor the policies that they pursued were ever acknowledged or legitimated. In fact, none of them accomplished anything except for Shlomo Dallāl,[13] who ran the party from December 2, 1948, to February 19, 1949, and whose contribution was, from the Communist standpoint, of the most destructive kind. In party annals he figures as a “crasher-in,” a “wrecker,” an “infantilist,” and a “treacherous Trotstkyite.” Under conditions that were clearly advantageous to the police, and when the only sane thing for the Communists to do was to retire into their shells, he transformed the remnants of the party into a military organization and in January 1949–in commemoration of the *Wathbah* and with the announced aim of rescuing the life of Fahd–repeatedly ordered into the streets “all members” or “all members except the provincial *mas‘ūls* and the *mas‘ūls* of workers,” advised them to carry arms and bombs, and to demonstrate “continually until further notice” or under the slogan “They want it a war of annihilation, let it be a war of annihilation!”[14] On 30 January he despatched a letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon, in which he gave notice that the Iraqi Communists were delivering “the decisive battle,” and went on to remind the Syrians of their “international duties towards the proletariat of a neighboring country” and to press them to organize all the Communist parties of the Arab East into a “revolutionary proletarian front.”[15] It was all fantastic, unreal, absurd. The tasks that Dallāl set for the party were, it goes without saying, utterly beyond its strength. There were only several hundreds of Communists left in the whole country. The call to deliver a battle of annihilation was, therefore, in effect a call to annihilate the party. The result was virtually just that. The senselessness of

Dallāl well-nigh consummated what the defection of ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq had begun. But perhaps Shlomo Dallāl was not so senseless. Perhaps he was not concerned at all about the fate of the Communists. Perhaps the "frenzied" and "suicidal" demonstrations he set on foot had nothing to do with the rescue of Fahd's life, but were really in the nature of a diversion and ought to be read in connection with what was going on at the time in Palestine. Perhaps, in other words, the authorities were right in suspecting that he was a Zionist. Dallāl's first "important appeal" to "prepare for decisive action" was issued on 25 December 1948.[16] On the twenty-first Fahd had been transferred from Kūt prison to Baghdād for retrial. On the twenty-second the Israelis had launched their offensive in the Negev against the Egyptian army. Did Dallāl's initiative relate to the one or to the other of these events? Was it all a coincidence? Here again, as in the earlier case of Yahūda Ṣiddīq,[17] we find ourselves on the unprofitable and dead-end alley of conjecture.

If the period from November 1948 to June 1949 was, from one point of vision, the period of the "unauthorized *masʻūls*" or the "unauthorized committees" and, from another point of vision, the period of the "Children Communists," from still a third point of vision, it was the period of the extreme fractionalization of the party. The Communists split into five mutually hostile groups–*Al-Ḥaqīqah* (The Truth), *An-Najmah* (The Star), *Aṣ-Ṣawāb* (The Right), *Al-Ittiḥād* (The Union), and the old *Qāʻidah* group. To all intents and purposes, by the middle of 1949 the party had ceased to matter. But the basic conditions of existence that had made for communism since the first years of the forties persisted, and would in the next decade evoke and reevoke forces which it would not be within the powers of the police to lay.

TABLE 23-1

The Unauthorized and Unacknowledged Central Committees (October 1948 to june 1949)

Name	Nation and religion	Date and place of birth	Profession
October 1948-November 1948			
ʿAzīz al-Ḥājj ʿAlī Ḥaidar*[a]	Failiyyah Kurd, Shīʿī[b]	1926, Baghdād	Secondary schoolteacher
Muḥammad ʿAbd-ul-Laṭīf[c]	Arab, Shīʿī	1921, Ḥillah	Assistant professor of engineering
Hāshim ʿAbdallah al-Arbīlī[c]	Kurd, Sunnī	1927, Arbīl	Engineering student
2 December 1948-19 February 1949			
Sasson Shlomo Dallāl*	Jew	1927, Baghdād	Secondary school student
Rafīq Tawfīq Jallāk	Kurd, Sunnī	1925, Sulaimāniyyah	Elementary schoolteacher
Ṣabrī ʿAbd-ul-Karīm	Arab, Sunnī	1928, Baṣrah	Employee, Baṣrah Oil Co.
February 1949-April 1949			
Jāsim Muḥammad aṭ-Ṭāʿān*	Arab, Shīʿī	1917, Kāḍhimiyyah	Mechanic
Samīr ʿAbd-ul-Aḥad George	Arabized Chaldean, Christian	?, Baghdād	Commerce student
Mahdī Ḥamīd	Kurd, Sunnī	1922, Sulaimāniyyah	Ex-lieutenant in the artillery
Ḥamīd ʿUthmān	Kurd, Sunnī	1927, Bīr Dāūd village[f]	Petitions' writer
8 April 1949-13 June 1949			
Ḥamīd ʿUthmān*	(See above)		
ʿAlī Ḥasan an-Najafī	Iranian, Shīʿī	1929, Najaf	Student
Yaʿqūb Manāḥim Qojmān	Jew	1925, Baghdād	Pharmacy student

Education	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*	*Subsequent history*
Higher Teachers' College	Working class; son of a porter	1946 (20)	In prison 1948-1958; member of Central Committee 1958-1967 (in Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia 1959-1967); led factional "Central Command" Group from 17 September 1967; arrested March 1969; released 1970
Engineering School, Baghdād	Middle class; son of a grain merchant	1945 (24)	In Eastern Germany in 1964
Engineering School, Baghdād	Lower middle class	? (?)	?
Secondary	Lower middle class; son of an ironmonger	1946 (19)	Hanged in 1949
Secondary	Lower middle class	1946 (21)	Joined police force in 1949
Secondary	Lower middle class; son of a small real estate owner	1943 (15)	Left party in 1949
Elementary	Working class	1947 (30)[d]	Left party; now a petty trader
School of Commerce	Lower middle class	? (?)	?
Military College (1942-1945)	Lower middle class	1945 (23)[e]	In prison 1949-1958; played a leading role in Mosul events of March 1959; executed 1963
Secondary	Lower middle class	1944 (17)	In prison from 1949; escaped 1954; secretary of party from 16 June 1954 to June 1955; ousted from the party 1956; now a member of Kurdish Democratic party
Secondary	Lower middle class; son of a man of religion	1948 (19)	Left party
School of Pharmacy	Lower middle class	1948 (23)	Member, Central Committee 1949-1951; arrested 1951; in prison till 1958

[*]First mas'ūl, i.e., comrade-in-charge.

[a]Arrested on 13 November 1948.

[b]Failiyyah Kurds are Shī'ī Kurds who live in Baghdād, Baṣraha, nd the mid-Tigris and Gharrāf regions.

[c]Arrested late November 1948.

[d]Formerly belonged to National Revolutionary Committee.

[e]Formerly belonged to Ruzkarī Kurd.
[f]Arbil province.

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FAHD, THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL, THE SOVIETS, THE SYRIAN COMMUNISTS, AND THE PEOPLE'S PARTY

The Iraqi Communist party is by definition not a shut-in, self-sufficient party–at least in an ideological sense. Its consciousness has been from the beginning permeated, if imperfectly, by the perspective of internationalism; and as time went on and, in particular, after Fahd took the helm, it became more and more genuinely a part of the common, worldwide ideological realm that the Bolshevik Revolution had created. From this supranational orientation flowed necessarily supranational loyalties and links.

In the days of the Communist International, the Communists themselves rationalized their ties beyond the frontiers in a more explicit manner, and with particular reference to imperialism. Imperialism, the enemy of the Iraqi people–ran their argument–was itself an international phenomenon and had most of the world for its stage. Communism, in fact–the argument went on–derived its international character from imperialism, for communism and imperialism were but opposite sides of the same dialectical world reality. Moreover, internationalism was not only an expression of the essence of that reality, but a political weapon imposed by it and absolutely indispensable. To shed internationalism meant in effect to disarm the peoples of the colonies and the toiling classes generally, and to surrender victory to the imperialists.

It is significant that the thinking of British political officers in Iraq proceeded from similar premises. In a 1949 letter to the Iraqi director of the "Criminal Investigations Department," P. B. Ray, an intelligence officer attached to the British Royal Air Force, emphasized, in the matter of combatting communism, "the necessity for very close liaison" between the police forces of Iraq and those of neighboring lands, and added: "All police officers to whatever country they belong are in effect brothers in arms

against a common enemy and there should be no barriers of creed, nationality, or selfish interests. There should be the closest interchange of information and complete cooperation in efforts to deal with the problem in hand."[1]

While clinging to internationalism, the Communists protested their love of their country and people. In their view, the two loyalties were only seemingly opposed but, properly understood, internationalism heightened patriotic feelings. "I threw myself into the national struggle before I embraced communism,"[2] said Fahd in June 1947, in answer to a question from the judge of Baghdād's Penal Court, "and after embracing communism... I felt a greater responsibility toward my country."[3] A few years before, in an editorial in the party paper, he defined "Leninist communism" as "the science and tactics of national liberation," as "our guide and weapon in our struggle for freeing our homeland and bringing happiness to our people." "In thus understanding communism, I am confident," he added, "that I sully in no way my belief in the internationalist principle."[4] In fact, however, a complete synthesis between the two loyalties was never achieved, and the inherent tension broke forth again and again in the life of the party or of its individual members.

But what did the internationalism of the Iraqi Communist party mean in the concrete? Did the party become in any real sense a detachment of the Communist International? Did it develop living relations with brother parties in the neighboring lands? To what extent, if at all, did the Soviet party participate in its growth or influence its behavior?

Undoubtedly the Communist International had a role in the development of Iraqi communism. It would be enough to cite in this regard the presence in Iraq in the twenties of the Comintern worker, Pyotr Vasili; the intermittent correspondence in the same and following decades between Iraqi revolutionaries and the League Against Imperialism, an auxiliary of the Comintern; the desultory activity in the early and middle thirties of the "Center for the Unity of the Communist Parties in the Arab Countries," sanctioned by the December 1926 decision of the Comintern's Secretariat for Oriental Affairs; the training at KUTV of ʻA Āṣim Flayyeḥ, a founder of the party, and of Fahd himself; and the trip of the latter to the Soviet Union in November 1942 to April 1943 on an apparent summons from the Comintern.

At the same time, it is beyond dispute that the relations between the party and the Comintern were never continuous. Moreover, though the Comintern could be said to have had a hand indirectly in the founding of the party in 1935, its reorganization in 1940 occurred spontaneously and on solely Iraqi initiative. Indeed, throughout the period ending with the dissolution of the Comintern in May 1943, the Iraqi Communists seldom came under the close and direct guidance of that organization, and were to all effective purposes on their own. They did reportedly receive on one occasion–in April 1943–"piles" of Communist books in English from Moscow, and in one or two other instances a supply of badly needed paper and stationery for *Al-Qā'idah* from Ivanov, an allegedly prominent Comintern emissary previously serving in Shanghai, and in the forties a member of a Baṣrah-based Soviet committee for the forwarding of Lend-Lease equipment to Russia.[5] But there is no evidence that they were propped up by the Comintern in any other way.

Did the coming of a Soviet legation into residence in Baghdād in late 1944 increase the opportunities for Soviet assistance to the party or contribute in other respects to a closer Soviet-Iraqi Communist interrelationship? The records of the police are quite unequivocal on this point:

> Despite the prevalent belief that Communist activity in this country is guided by the Russian legation and by Russian agents [wrote Bahjat Aṭiyyah, Iraq's chief of political police on 12 March 1946], we have thus far been unable to discover any evidence to this effect or even a ground for suspicion. As a matter of fact, information gathered from reliable sources indicates that the Russian legation shirks from any interference in such actions. . . . The contacts, that Monsieur Arkady Suvorov [the secretary of the Legation] had had of late with Armenian residents, related to the Soviet appeals for migration to Soviet Armenia. Inasmuch as a large number of Armenians are employed in the railways, at the Baṣrah port, and with the oil companies, it was deemed necessary to place them under tight supervision.[6]

When Fahd was arrested on 18 January 1947, one of the first questions asked by his captors bore on his relations with the Soviets and with Communists outside Iraq. Fahd categorically denied that the Iraqi party had "organizational ties" with other Communist parties or any connection whatever with foreign states. He repeated his denial before Baghdād's Higher Penal Court on 23 June 1947 after the state prosecutor had declared that a letter was found on him on the day of his arrest bearing witness to an exchange of correspondence between Iraqi Communists and Moscow by the medium of the Soviet ambassador in Teheran. The letter, according to the prosecutor, had been sent to Fahd from Syria on 17 December 1946 by an Iraqi Communist whose name there was "no justifying reason to mention." The accusation, Fahd protested to the court, cast a shadow on "the moral reputation" of the party. The "alleged" letter, he added, was not shown to him either during the preliminary investigations or subsequently. He requested therefore, to have a look at it, but the court ignored his request.[7]

A decade later, as I was pursuing my study of the records of Iraq's Investigations Department, I came upon the letter in question. A translation of its more pertinent passages follows:

Tuesday, 17/12/1946

Honored[8] and Respected *Ustāz*,[9]

. . . Muḥammad Ḥusain al-Firtawsī[10] told me. . . that he met on Saturday with "Ustāz" ʻAbd-ul-Qādir[11] from 3:30 to 8:30 P.M. and that they discussed the question of the League[12] and the Communist party.[13] Al-Firtawsī showed him copies of letters sent from Moscow to the League through the Soviet ambassador in Teheran. The League [he explained] had informed Moscow of the errors of the Communist party and of its decision to break away. Moscow's answer was: "If a break-away is unavoidable, you must not adopt slogans against the Communist party." Thereupon ʻAbd-ul-Qādir left him to tell Comrade Khālid[14] about these things. Al-Firtawsī was called after that to the room of Comrade Khālid, who said that he knew of this exchange of letters, but that it had not taken place in his days but under the supervision of the leader of the Moroccan Communist party, who had charge at that time of the organizations of the Middle East. (It appears that Comrade Khālid substitutes for the

Moroccan Communist Party chief who has [since] been killed by the French.) I myself have not set eyes on any of the letters. I tried to see them but I failed. . . .

Devotedly, Ḥusain ‘Alwān ar-Rufai’ī[15]

The letter is a curious document. It is unlike any other letter from Syria, and indeed unlike any Communist piece of writing. The form of address, the tone, the style, the terms in which the letter is couched are definitely not Communist. No party member referred to Fahd, who prided himself on his proletarian connections, as *ustāz*– an appellation distinctively attaching to intellectuals. Communist letters from Syria were usually unsigned or bore only a party name–often that of “Hāris” (“Guardian”), Fahd’s regular correspondent–seldom a full signature. They did not as a rule contain very explicit references. Thus the Communist Party of Iraq appears in the letters as the “Iraqi company” or “the party of good people” or “the party of al-Hājjī,” al- Hājjī (“The Pilgrim”) being one of Fahd’s nicknames. Moreover, in regard to content, the letter–in paragraphs other than the one quoted here-is substantially similar to a letter sent by “Hāris” from Damascus on 4 January 1947. That the Soviets would have corresponded with an insignificant Communist faction or risked compromising their ambassador in Teheran for that purpose is also open to doubt. Nor would it have been in their tradition to permit secession or factionalism. Even the meticulousness of the letter as to day and hours seems a bit unnatural. Other strange features are the reluctance of the state prosecutor to reveal in court the name of the sender, and the absence of the name of Ḥusain ‘Alwān ar-Rufai’ī, a known Najāfī Communist, from the key lists of Communists kept in the Investigations Department. And then there is the inconsistency in which the letter appears to involve itself: it purports to reveal that the Communist parties of the Middle East were under the supervision of Khālid Bakdāsh, the Syrian party secretary–and earlier of the Moroccan Communist party chief–while implying that this was news to the correspondent and to Fahd himself. In other words, the Iraqi Communist party came under Bakdāsh but did not know it!

In what relation did the Communists of Iraq stand to the Syrian party? Were they in fact subordinate to Bakdāsh? And how did the chief Communist in a country as far off as Morocco happen to come into the picture? Data of a greater degree of reliability indicate that for a time in the thirties both the Iraqi and Syrian parties fell under the "Center for the Unity of the Communist Parties in the Arab countries," and that this center was led for some months in 1936-1937 by Maḥmūd al-Maghribī, a KŪTV-trained Palestinian Arab of Algerian origin. The surname "al-Maghribī"–in Arabic, "North African" or "Moroccan"– perhaps explains the reference in the letter just discussed to the Moroccan party leader. This in turn suggests that its writer was–in addition to all his other insufficiencies–not very well up in his Communist chronology: the League of Iraqi Communists–one of the sides to the alleged correspondence–came into being only in 1944, whereas al-Maghribī was arrested in Beirut in 1937 and exiled at first to Palestine and eventually to Algeria. [16]

At any rate, by the end of 1937–to return to the more important question of the relations between the Iraqi and Syrian Communists–the center for Communist unity had ceased to exist. The Syrian party now shifted completely for itself, and laid more and more stress on its character as a national party. The Iraqi Communists, for their part, had fallen into ruin: their central organization had been swept away and their beliefs were scarcely kept glowing in isolated and widely dispersed cells.

When, however, in 1940 a process of revival set in and the Iraqi party was reconstituted, one of the first thoughts of the new command was to build up ties again with Syria. With that end in view, it despatched letters to Khālid Bakdāsh, but through prudence or lack of interest, or for other unaccountable reasons, no response whatever came.[17] Perhaps some of the letters never reached their destination: back in September 1939 the Syrian party had been forced into the underground. But even after its reemergence in January 1942, its strange reticence remained unbroken. If its publications began shortly afterwards trickling into Iraq, this was due solely to the initiative of Iraqis studying in Syria.

Indeed, at this stage the Communists in Baghdād were largely left to their own devices, and could count only on the support of their neighbor

to the east–Tūdeh. The old Iraqi revolutionary Mahdī Hāshim,[18] an exile in Iran since 1937, acted as a secret channel of communications between them and may have been instrumental in securing the printing press that Fahd is said to have brought with him from Iran in April 1943,[19] and which greatly facilitated the work of the party.

So far as the available documentation goes, no direct contact with Syria was made until the spring of 1944, when Krikor Badrossian, the secretary of the Armenian branch of the Iraqi Communist party sought out Bakdāsh in Damascus on the instructions of Fahd. There was some thought, it appears, of linking up the Iranian, Iraqi, and Syrian Communists by a system of surreptitious communications. As part of the plan, a wireless set, which Fahd expected to receive from Iran, was to be smuggled to Bakdāsh. But the latter's clear-headed caution had been left out of reckoning. Had Badrossian not insisted, Bakdāsh would not have seen him at all and even then, as Badrossian later told the police, "he refused to understand anything of what I said or to hear me any further."[20]

As likely as not, it was only in the middle of 1945, when Muḥammad ʻAll az-Zarqā, a Syrian schoolteacher and a candidate member of the Iraqi Central Committee,[21] returned to the land of his birth, that something more than a random or desultory connection with the Syrian party was established. It was also about that time that the Iraqi emigré ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʻīl[22] began to write to Fahd, but his letters were few and far between. The habitual correspondent of Fahd after 1945 was "Hāris,"[23] one of his trusted disciples and a student at the Syrian university. He was, so to say, his eye and ear in Damascus. He gathered news, felt out moods and opinions, and reported to Fahd on them. His letters were not sent, to be sure, through the post or by special party couriers, but were entrusted to safe travelers for personal delivery.

All these links remained, in Fahd's time, on a purely informal level and never developed into systematic or organized relations. Their effects were visible mostly in the realm of ideas, and in this regard the Iraqis were clearly more receptive than the Syrians. Interestingly enough, when physical connections were weaker, the Iraqis were more open to such influences: in 1944, for example, they drew up a charter similar to the program of the Syrian Communist party and adopted as their own its

basic watchword. And they did so entirely of their own accord. When, however, connections improved, their emulation of the Syrian party became less marked.

Contrary to current notions, the two parties were not in any way responsible for each other. Khālid Bakdāsh neither gave the Iraqi Communists their line of policy, nor acted as a kind of foster-father to them. The records, in fact, create the impression that Fahd and Bakdāsh did not see eye-to-eye on vital issues, and that for a time their relations were severely strained.

The differences between the two leaders had their roots in the different living situations that they faced. By comparison with Iraq, Syria was then, as later, more homogeneous in its population and in its sentiments and impulses. The disparities between its propertied and proper-tyless were less extreme and less visible. The yoke of government was lighter, speech freer, political action more independent, and the Syrian Communist party–unlike its Iraqi counterpart–basked in the full warmth of legality. Milder conditions naturally tend to engender milder views. It is thus no accident that in Syria, communism has always been more restrained and more moderate in its expressions, and in Iraq more impassioned and more uncompromising. The sharp and bitter divisions in this latter country lend its social and political problems an explosive force, and render its underprivileged sensitive to the most daring of revolutionary ideas. Bakdāsh reportedly complained once that Fahd had a “Bolshevik” cast of mind and a partiality for “armed insurrection.”[24] The complaint, if truly made, was in point and the complainant in character.

Bakdāsh and Fahd were really two different types of Communist. Fahd was first and foremost a revolutionary, and at home only in the underground. Bakdāsh was from top to toe a politician, and in this respect–as became fully evident in the fifties–excelled as much on the open parliamentary stage as in moves behind the scenes. Moreover, Bakdāsh was markedly more flexible, more calculating, and more disciplined in his ideas than Fahd. He was also better read, and had definitely a broader horizon.

To these differences in quality and temperament must be added differences in personal background and history. Bakdāsh was an Arabized

Kurd, Fahd an Arabized Chaldean. Bakdāsh descended from a Moslem, Fahd from a Christian family. Bakdāsh, who was born in Damascus in 1912,[25] was also eleven years younger than Fahd. It is not clear in what type of milieu he grew up. His father was, in one version, an ex-Ottoman officer, in another a lowly and devout warden who guarded olive trees on the Qāṣyūn, a hill overlooking Damascus. At any rate, he cared well for Bakdāsh's rearing, and put him through good schools with the help, it appears, of wealthy Kurdish landowners and in particular of ʻAlī Āgha Zalfū, who continued to show interest in the Bakdāsh of later days–even to the extent, it is reported, of financing his campaigns for the Syrian Chamber of Deputies in 1943 and 1954.[26] ʻAlī Āgha Zalfū, incidentally, was also the father-in-law of ʻAbd-ul-Hamīd as-Sarrāj, Syria's one-time strong man.

Thus Bakdāsh was spared the distress that had forced Fahd to leave school prematurely and, for his part, made the most of his opportunities. He showed brilliance in his studies and developed an avid passion for solid reading. In 1930, at the age of eighteen, and three years after the founding of the Baṣrah Communist circle by Fahd and his companions, Bakdāsh joined the Syrian Communist party. He was then a first-year student at the Damascus School of Law, and had come under the influence of young Armenian Communists. From this point, and for the next few years, his life paralleled that of Fahd. In 1931-1933, he was imprisoned at intervals by the French for carrying on agitation among the students and for taking part in political demonstrations. Ordered into exile by the party in 1933, he went to Moscow and attended in 1934-1936 the Communist University of the Toilers of the East. His high abilities attracted the attention of D. Manuilskii, an aide of Stalin and the head of the university, who henceforward–it is said–took him under his wing. It was also at this university that Bakdāsh first met Fahd. How they took to each other at that time is a matter for speculation. Whether the impressions then left with Bakdāsh had anything to do with the chilly skepticism with which he later met the rise of Fahd in the Iraqi Communist party is equally conjectural. In 1935, both attended the Seventh World Congress of the Comintern, Fahd as a mere observer and Bakdāsh as chairman of the Syrian delegation. In 1936– as Fahd entered

on his second-year course of revolutionary training–Bakdāsh returned to Syria and assumed full charge of the party. In the summer of the same year he left for France, where a Popular Front government had shortly before come to power, and helped the delegates of the National Bloc, Syria's principal political grouping, in the negotiations for the Franco-Syrian Treaty. In 1937 he revisited France and the USSR, and apparently met Fahd again and for the last time. In the following years, while Fahd struggled in Iraq in obscurity and under very difficult conditions, Bakdāsh was continually in the glare of Communist publicity, attending one international conference after another: among others, a meeting of the Profintern in Paris and party congresses in Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. From 1940 to 1941, however, he led the Syrian underground against the Vichyites. But this proved to be no more than an episodic interlude. In 1942 he reemerged into view, and a year later ran for the Chamber of Deputies, suffering defeat but receiving a surprisingly substantial number of votes. Eventually, of course, he won his way to the Chamber and became the Arab World's first Communist deputy, but this occurred in 1954, five years after the death of Fahd on the gallows.[27]

In view of their peculiar and diverse careers, it is not surprising that by the middle forties, when the relations between them became strained, Bakdāsh should have been already a recognized figure in the Communist world and a pacemaker of ideas within Arab communism, while the name of Fahd should scarcely have been known outside Iraq.

If in the qualities, temperaments, and circumstances of Bakdāsh and Fahd there was more contrast than similarity, the same could be said of their ideas and policies, particularly from 1944 on. The Bakdāsh of the forties was a very unorthodox Communist. He as much as threw by the board the Marxian concept of the inherent connection between party and class. He went even further. He disassociated membership in the Communist party–surprising as it may seem–from loyalty to Marxism-Leninism. "All citizens irrespective of their social and philosophical ideas," declared Bakdāsh at the December 1943-January 1944 Congress of the Syrian Communist party, "are welcome to our party so long as they accept its charter."[28] And the charter of the party called for nothing more than national independence, democratic freedoms, and very timid

reforms.[29] It was as if Bakdāsh intended to flood the party with elements alien to its basic point of view or to convert it into a broad, ideologically indistinct organization. It is probable, however, that he proposed at the same time to separate from it a purist guiding nucleus, although on this point evidence fails us. At the basis of Bakdāsh's policy was the premise that the Arab countries were still in "the stage of national liberation," a stage which required an emphasis on what unites rather than on what divides "between the sons of the one homeland."[30] Bakdāsh had sounded this note from the time his party emerged from illegality in 1942, if not earlier, and had coupled it with liberal assurances to the established classes:

> We assure the national capitalist, the national factory owner that we do not look with envy or with malice at his national enterprise. On the contrary, we desire his progress and vigorous growth. All what we ask is the bettering of the conditions of the national worker. . . . We assure the owners of land that we do not and shall not demand the confiscation of their property. . . . All what we ask is kindness towards the peasant and the alleviation of his misery. ... "A maneuver! A maneuver!" some would cry out! But what maneuver? We write these things in our papers and our books, we speak of them before tens of thousands, and we educate our comrades and friends in their spirit.[31]

Repeatedly Bakdāsh went out of his way to drive home the point that his party was "not in the first place a party of social reform." This was something "pinned on us by people who are bent on relegating us to the margin of national life so as to have the national movement all to themselves." "The Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon is above all and before every consideration a party of national liberation, a party of freedom and independence."[32] "We are and have been patriots and nationalists from the time our eyes opened to life."[33] "We do not derive our policy. . . from Moscow, we base it on the interests of our homeland."[34] This was also the party's point of departure in the matter of Arab relations with the Soviet Union:

> This is a question that life itself places before us . . . a question that can no longer be evaded. The time is past when a politician or a "nationalist" could say: "Why bother with the country of the Soviets? It is a strange land and remote from us!" . . . But the question now is that of a country that has as great a say today in the conduct of the international war as it will have tomorrow in the organization of the world. To cut the way on winks and innuendoes we hasten to add that we, on our side, approach this issue as patriots and as Arabs. . . and are not so much concerned because the Soviet Union has a particular social system. . . .[35]
>
> Independence for the peoples and freedom for the nationalities . . . are of the nature of the Soviet state. . . . But if some call to question this basic point of principle, what cannot be controverted is that it is in the interests of the Soviet Union as a state and a requirement of its security . . . that the Arab East shall not become a focal point for the concentration of forces that might one day threaten it from the side of the Caucasus or from any other side. In other words, the security of the Soviet Union requires . . . an Arab East free from imperialist influence and in control of its own affairs. . . . From whichever angle we view Soviet policy nothing but good for all the Arabs can come from it. . . . As patriots and as Arabs we must, therefore, adopt an unequivocal attitude towards the Soviet state. . . . This is not a partisan matter. . . but one of national interest and of concern to the people as a whole.[36]

Would Fahd have quarreled with these conclusions? Wherein did he differ from Bakdāsh? Briefly, on all the points just raised, Fahd was a conventional Communist through and through. Thus on the issue of relations with the Soviets, Fahd never argued from national interest, but always from Communist principle.[37] But this is perhaps a trivial matter. More significantly, Fahd never divorced, not even for purely tactical purposes, the concept of national interest from that of class, nor the concept of class from that of party, nor membership in the party from allegiance to Marxism-Leninism, as Bakdāsh appears to have done.

Fahd clung to the classic Communist idea that there is no generalized national interest: the nation is split into classes and the classes have conflicting interests. He agreed that the existing stage of Arab development

was “the stage of national liberation,” and that the foremost question of the day was the national question, but insisted that “the working class” had its own special view of this question, and that only “the peasants, the craftsmen, the ‘earners’[38] and the people’s intelligentsia” had “national and class interests compatible with that view.”[39] From these classes alone, and particularly from the proletariat, the party was to draw its members.[40] No hostile “bourgeois” influence was to be allowed to creep into its ranks.[41] For “effendis and their like of fellow travellers” its doors were to remain firmly bolted.[42] Of course, the term “people’s intelligentsia” was somewhat vague, and it was often empirically difficult to tell the difference between an “effendi” and an “intellectual of the people,” as Fahd himself found out from experience. At any rate, for Fahd the ultimate criterion was fidelity to Marxism-Leninism, which remained in Iraq a *sine qua non* of party membership.[43]

Bakdāsh could have gone on spreading unorthodox ideas in Syria as long as he pleased, and Fahd would not in all probability have been the least exercised, had not Bakdāsh–in his own indirect manner and quite over the head of Fahd–attempted to apply these ideas to Iraq. Here, indeed, lay the immediate source of the tension between the two leaders. This brings us to the affair of Hizb-ish-Sha‘b, or the People’s party.

The People’s party was in reality the brainchild of Fahd. The latter had long felt the need for a legal spearhead that could at least provide a platform for the coming of his followers into the open. The idea first occurred to him in October 1941, and from July 1943 onward became a constant burden of his thought.[44] In March 1944, it received the formal blessing of the First Party Conference,[45] but did not acquire concrete shape until the following June, when two of Fahd’s lieutenants–Zakī Basīm and Ḥusain ash-Shabībī–approached the well-known lawyer and journalist Yaḥya Qāsim and seven of his companions,[46] all contributors to the anti-fascist publications *Rasā’il al-Ba‘th*[47] (“The Renaissance Letters”), and induced them to petition the government for the licensing of a “People’s Party.” On receipt of the petition, Arshad al-‘Umarī, the dominant figure in the ruling cabinet, sent after Yaḥya Qāsim, offered him a post in the Ministry of Supply, and suggested that he “quit babbling about a People’s party and other such idle talk.”[48] Qāsim turned down the offer, but within two months–in August, to be precise–broke with the other “founding members” of the party,[49] who

now resigned themselves entirely into the hands of ‘Azīz Sharīf, the publisher of *Rasā’il al-Ba‘th* and an ex-deputy, a judge, and a friend of Bakdāsh.

‘Azīz Sharīf–the future leader of the Iraqi Peace Partisans and winner of the Lenin Peace Prize–was not, strictly speaking, an adherent of communism. He himself categorically denied having ever been a member of the Communist party, although he admitted to “an identity of views with the Communists on many issues.”[50] Yet it would be far from correct to say that he merely hung around the Communists. In a sense, he was a living embodiment of intermediacy and transitoriness: “a nationalist today, a Marxist-Communist tomorrow” even in the eyes of his own followers,[51] or, as a contemporary preferred to describe him, a Marxist who believed that the time had not come to make an open avowal of his faith.[52] Sometimes he was uncharitably relegated to the fellowship of Communists who did not wish to pay dearly for their communism. It is perhaps true that he did not, like Fahd, seek danger, and preferred to struggle in comfort. He certainly had no taste for underground life.

In at least one respect he had the better of Fahd: he was a Moslem. This was very important in a country like Iraq. In this particular sense, Fahd was more of a liability than an asset to the Communist cause. If ideologically the Christian origin of Fahd was a trifle, objectively it was another dagger in the sheath of the enemy, Bakdāsh must have reasoned. From the point of view of propaganda and public sensibility, the whole background of ‘Azīz Sharīf told indeed in his favor.

‘Azīz Sharīf was born in 1904 in ‘Ānah, a four-thousand-year old Sunnī townlet on the upper Euphrates, to a family of small independent farmers and highly respected men of religion. Although brought up on the old beliefs, he did not take after his father, a *khatīb* (preacher) at the local mosque and the virtual leader of the town. He did attend at first the *Kūttab* (Qur’ān school) but later modern state schools, where he imbibed nationalist ideas and hatred for imperialism. Like so many other Iraqis of his generation, his initiation into politics dates from the 1928 demonstration against Alfred Mond. In the same year, he joined the Baghdād School of Law, and after his graduation in 1932 helped in the editing of the reformist *Al-Ahālī*. Raised to the bench in 1934, he resigned his appointment ten months later: without providing the evidence prescribed by law, the

authorities had required him to issue a warrant for the arrest of ‘Abd-ul-Hamīd al-Khatīb,[53] a Communist by reputation but secretly a cat’s paw of the police. In 1936-1937 he supported the military government of Bakr Sidqī, became a People’s Reformist, and represented Baṣrah in the Chamber of Deputies. In 1941 he hymned the praises of the “Rashīd ‘Ālī movement” for its challenge of the English, but disapproved of its approaches to fascism. Shortly after taking a hand in 1942 in the revival of *Al-Ahālī*, he disagreed with its sponsors and began publishing *Rasā’il al-Ba‘th*. Reappointed judge in 1943, he relinquished his position in the following year to devote himself entirely to the People’s party.[54]

The People’s party began now to take shape. No official license for it had as yet been secured. All the same, statements appeared in the press bearing the signature “Founding Members of the People’s Party,” and ‘Azīz Sharīf’s men stumped Baghdād and other towns canvassing for support. The government did not seem to mind, but Fahd did. Things were not developing as he had envisaged. ‘Azīz Sharīf was not the type of person whom he could keep under his thumb–that was clear from the beginning. But he had hoped at least to procure his cooperation. This was not forthcoming. ‘Azīz Sharīf quietly ignored Fahd, and trod a path of his own.

Worse than that, ‘Azīz Sharīf and his collaborators began before long–according to Fahd–to agitate for “the liquidation of the secret struggle and the dissolution of the Iraqi Communist party.”[55] Subsequently, “being at their wits’ end, they attributed this false slogan to the leaders of the Syrian Communist party . . . and by representing it as a recommendation that must be carried into effect because it came from Syria, were able to bend [to their purpose] a number of persons who are fascinated by everything that comes from outside Iraq.”[56]

More than a decade later, in reply to a question by this writer, ‘Azīz Sharīf denied having at any time called for the dissolution of the Communist party, but did not elaborate. [57] On the other hand, Mālik Saif, a member of Fahd’s Central Committee and a defector, affirmed that ‘Azīz Sharīf undertook a journey to Syria in the late summer of 1944, and on his return told Fahd that he had seen Bakdāsh and had explained to him his plans for the People’s party, and that Bakdāsh felt that there was no longer any need for a conspiratorial organization. Fahd is then said to have coolly

remarked that it would have been more proper for Bakdāsh to refer ‘Azīz Sharīf to the Iraqi Communist party.[58]

At any rate, in February 1945 Fahd opened in the columns of *Al-Qā‘idah* an attack on the “liquidators,” which gathered in vigor and pungency as the months went by. He declared the continuance of the Communist party “a national necessity.” No other social force had “the experience and steadfastness of the working class in the combatting of world imperialism,” and “the working class wishes to–and must–struggle under its own standard.” The premise that Iraq lived in the “stage of national liberation” could not serve as a pretext for the liquidation of the party, for the working class did not separate the national from the social content of liberation. From its point of view, national liberation is but the starting point of “a fundamental change in the life of the people.”[59] “ ‘But where is the Iraqi working class?’ the liquidators would say.” If proof were needed for its existence, it was sufficiently provided by: the Labor Law No. 72 of 1936; the founding of a Labor Department in the Ministry of Social Affairs; the licensing of unions for laborers in industries embracing “upwards of 100,000” hands; and the employment of 67,000 Iraqi workers by the various agencies of the British army.[60] What, then, did the call for the dissolution of the Iraqi Communist party really mean? “It meant depriving the workers of their means of defence and abandoning their unions to fate and ’spontaneousness.’”[61]

The hostile campaign against the “liquidators” ran its course in September 1945, when Fahd received a remarkable letter from Beirut containing definite assurances from the Syrian Communist party, and which Fahd at once and triumphantly published:

> My dear Secretary General of the Iraqi Communist Party,[62]
>
> Greetings. When I was in Syria I had a meeting with. . . ,[63] member of the Central Committee of the Syrian Communist party and one of the persons to whom the statement relating to the “dissolution of the Iraqi Communist party” had been attributed. ... He made plain to me first in the presence of Wasfī al-Bunnī[64] and later in a heart-to-heart conversation what follows:
>
> The Syrian Communists individually and collectively are innocent of this slogan. The party in Syria cannot, under any circumstances,

> adopt or recommend for adoption slogans of this sort, neither with regard to Iraq nor with regard to Syria. The secret struggle and the party organization are two keystones that cannot be dispensed with, particularly at a time when the reaction not only in Iraq but also in Syria is striving by every means to suppress democratic freedoms and hinder the advance of the free and progressive forces. . . . It is not indeed improbable that the legal Communist parties will be compelled under pressure to revert to underground work. This is on the one hand. On the other hand, no slogan bearing on Iraq can emanate from the party in Syria and Lebanon. The party in Syria does not have the right to dictate slogans to the progressive movement in Iraq. For one thing, it is not in possession of the basic data which would enable it to formulate slogans, and, secondly, an Iraqi Communist party is in the field and nearer to local issues and movements. The party in Syria and Lebanon has never interfered in party affairs in Iraq, neither in connection with the callers for "the dissolution of the party" nor with any other group, and accordingly commissions the Iraqi Communist party to give the lie to all reports and rumors ascribed to it whatever their character.

Was this a formal disavowal of an informally inspired policy? Was Bakdāsh, in other words, shifting his ground? Or had the slogan been falsely attributed to him, to begin with? Of course, a call for the dissolution of the Communist party would have gone against the whole grain of the Leninist tradition.[65] But was this precisely the purport of the recommendation that was said to have been made by Bakdāsh? Or was the intention merely to transform Fahd's organization into a more broadly based party–in the image of the Syrian Communist party–and to bring it under a leadership which was more supple and showed deference to Bakdāsh's views? These are questions that cannot be definitively answered. But it is perhaps significant that the disavowal, though free from ambiguity, was not made by Bakdāsh himself, and came after the controversy had gone a long way and at a time when the "Founding Members of the People's Party" seemed to have been caught in a blind alley, the government turning only a deaf ear to their repeated appeals for legitimacy. No less significant is the attitude taken by Bakdāsh after the government reversed its position and

licensed the People's party, that is, after April 2, 1946. But to grasp the real meaning of that attitude, a few words need to be said first about the party that now entered upon the political arena.

The People's party was in all important aspects modeled on the Syrian Communist party. Like its prototype in Syria, it spared no pains to pass in the thought of the public for a strictly national party, and flung its doors open to all patriots without regard to their social origin or their social views.[66] The only qualification upon which it insisted was an implacable opposition to British influence. On that basis it showed readiness to stand shoulder to shoulder even with "chauvinists, men of religion, and out-and-out capitalists,"[67] as one well-informed contemporary put it. At the same time, its leaders[68] reportedly inculcated Communist ideas to selected members in closed circles, and while impressing upon them that they formed "the genuine nucleus of a future Communist party," warned them against demonstrating their true inclinations in "the present stage of Iraq's history."[69] But despite this curious attempt to disguise their real selves, its leaders were widely regarded as Communists or Marxists, but of the bloodless and second-rate variety or, as the authorities appear to have thought, of the coffee-house type. They "spend so much time talking like a lot of chattering crows," noted in their dossier the Interior Ministry's British Technical Adviser, "and seem to think that this world and all on it is made by talking."[70]

The size of the party was also not very impressive. In February 1947, it numbered 1,171 members in the city of Baghdād and "about 1,000" in the rest of the country,[71] while the National Democratic party, the largest legal organization in Iraq, had in April of the same year a total strength of 6,961 members.[72] Its numerical weakness was, of course, a direct consequence of the division of the leftist movement against itself.

In terms of social composition, it is clear from Table 24-1 that the main organization of the party had its anchorage in the proletariat and petty bourgeoisie, and particularly among the railway and construction workers and the carpenters, who together formed 55.3 percent of the total Baghdād membership. One conspicuous feature is the very thin proportion of the intelligentsia in the party (6.1 percent), although it had the helm in its hands. This contrasted sharply with conditions in Fahd's organization, where the intelligentsia was heavily represented in all the different echelons

and among the active rank and file,[73] despite Fahd's distrust of this stratum and his bitter diatribes against the "effendis." The explanation lay in the legal exclusion from any form of political life–the dubious voting privilege excepted–of students, teachers, and state officials, who constituted between them the bulk of the intelligentsia. (The students referred to in Table 24-1 appear to have slipped in under a different rubric: in the People's party records they were listed under "Miscellaneous.") One other thing stands out: unlike Fahd's organization, the People's party did not include in its ranks any Iraqis of the Jewish faith. [74] This was the result of calculation. "Our policy," explained later a member of the Central Committee of the party,[75] "was not inspired by racial bias but by a prudent regard for the objective conditions of the country,"

TABLE 24-1

The People's Party: Occupation of Members Belonging to Baghdād Organization of Party in 1947

		Total	*Percentage*
Students		56	4.8
College	54		
Secondary school	2		
Members of professions		15	1.3
Teachers	4		
Lawyers	11		
Workers and semiproletarians		616	52.6
Construction workers	277		
Railway workers	182		
Porters	73		
Drivers	84		
Petty bourgeoisie: craftsmen and petty traders		484	41.3
Carpenters	189		
Miscellaneous (craftsmen and petty traders)	295		
Total		1,171	100.0

Source: Figures are taken from a report by the Assistant Director of Police, Baghdād Province to the Minister of Interior, dated 15 February 1947, and from an entry bearing the date April 1947 in the Iraqi Police File entitled "The People's Party."

From the point of view of Fahd, the coming of the People's party onto the political stage was, to say the least, an inconvenient fact. Its growth, he

feared, could only divide and bewilder the working people. From the outset, therefore, he bent every effort to reduce it to power-lessness. He began by launching a rival party, the National Liberation party, which, although never officially authorized, had free play for three whole months, from April to June 1946.[76] Fahd then shifted to another tactic: he introduced detachments of his own into his antagonist's citadel. Of the 1,171 members of the People's party Baghdād organization in 1947, 51 actually belonged–it was found out subsequently–to the Iraqi Communist party, 125 to the National Liberation party, and 24 to the League Against Zionism.[77] All the while Fahd did his best to coat the leaders of the People's party with the tar of opportunism, and to isolate their followers and weed them out of the workers' and craftsmen's unions. As in all his fights, he went the whole length and gave no quarter. In consequence, the People's party was never able to rise to any serious role. Moreover, much bad blood was generated. In Baṣrah, the partisans of ʻAzīz Sharīf yelled threats at the partisans of Fahd: "We know who is your leader. . . . We will expose you!" But they only showed their teeth and did not bite. At one point–in 1946–incensed at the crowding out of his followers from the Port Workers' Union, ʻAzīz Sharīf bluntly denounced the Union's Administrative Bureau as "fascist." When he next put in an appearance at al-Maʻqil, the site of the main wharves, the port workers met him with hisses, jeers, and threats, and well-nigh beat him up.[78] The two sides seemed to be driving things to the extremity of mutual frustration.

The conflict between the Iraqi Communist party and the People's party revealed itself before long as a conflict between Fahd and Bakdāsh. This is what gives it its exceptional interest. Despite the scarcely year-old protestations of noninterference in Iraqi affairs, Bakdāsh came down on the side of the People's party. As was his wont, he himself said nothing in public. But it was noticed that his paper *Ṣawt-ash-Shaʻb* gave prominence to the activities of the People's party and completely ignored the Iraqi Communist party or its auxiliary, the National Liberation party. Simultaneously, ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʻīl[79] assured Fahd's correspondent in Syria: "We here recognize only the party of al-Hājjī,"[80] that is, of Fahd. But it seemed as if ʻAbd-ul-Qādir said one thing and Bakdāsh did another. Moreover, Fahd had reason to believe that Bakdāsh was working against him among the young Iraqis studying in Syria. In November 1946, he wrote

to ‘Abd-ul-Qādir complaining of the “improper guidance” given to them,[81] and by way of counter-measure planned to establish a branch for his party in Damascus, but ‘Abd-ul-Qādir interposed his firm and conclusive objection. “I talked to the elder Iraqi brother,”[82] wrote Fahd’s correspondent in Damascus on 14 November 1946, “about opening a special branch for our company that would be only morally connected with them. But he and brother Muḥammad[83] thought ill of such a form of activity and said that commercial usage[84] required adherence to them.”[85] Subsequently, ‘Abd-ul-Qādir insisted on the necessity of submitting to the party command in Damascus all letters originating in Syria and addressed to Fahd on the ground that the senders were organizationally tied to the Syrian Communist party.[86] Then on 17 December 1946, ‘Abd-ul-Qādir wrote to Fahd reproachfully:

> I am astonished at your statement that we here improperly guide the brethren from Iraq. . . . This is truly a mistake. It is strange that you form an incorrect opinion and attempt to act with us as one state with another, that is, to retaliate by forming a special organization in Syria. You surely must know that all [Communist] organizations in a country come under the [Communist] party of that country. Any other arrangement is impermissible and would conflict with party principles. Only to other than the true brethren we say join whichever Iraqi group you wish, but to the true brethren we indicate only the party.[87]

Even as Fahd and ‘Abd-ul-Qādir exchanged reproaches Bakdāsh’s *Ṣawt-ash-Sha‘b* broke its strange silence on the Iraqi Communist party and published for the first time a statement issued by Fahd and bearing on the situation in Iraq.[88] Was this a sort of an olive branch? Or had the experiment of the People’s party not lived up to Bakdāsh’s expectations? Only further developments could tell, but the development that now occurred was entirely unforeseen: on January 18, 1947, Fahd and his closest companions were nabbed by the police.

With Fahd out of the way, the field seemed clear for *‘Azīz* Sharīf and his followers. But they had reason to know better. The government, which had already shut down their daily paper *Al-Watan*, “counted their every breath.”

If for a little longer they were able to act with some slight vestige of freedom, on September 27, 1947, they were formally suppressed. Shortly after, ‘*Azīz* Sharīf left Iraq for Syria.

The People’s party did not, however, come to an end. Even though deprived of a center and of leadership, a minority of members persevered. They quickly buried the hatchet and established a bridge with the Communist party, and in this manner prepared the ground for the forming of the “Cooperation Committee,” which was destined to play an important part in the *Wathbah* of January 1948.[89]

But the three-year-old conflict between Fahd on the one hand and Bakdāsh and ‘Azīz Sharīf on the other did not die out. It came to life again for a few brief months after the *Wathbah*, when ‘Azīz Sharīf returned from Syria, the People’s party reemerged, and Bakdāsh once more descended–from Fahd’s standpoint–on the wrong side of the fence.[90]

It is not without interest that Fahd, now an inmate of Kūt prison, came to entertain doubts as to the “Bolshevism” of Bakdāsh, although–according to an internal Iraqi Communist source–he forbad any criticism of the Syrian Communist leader or any reference to his “deviations.”[91] However, when in 1948 Bakdāsh admitted to “opportunist leanings in the Syrian and Lebanese Communist parties” and traced their roots to “some of the erroneous tactical positions taken by the two parties in important political questions,”[92] and word of Bakdāsh’s *mea culpa* was brought to Fahd in the prison, Fahd turned to his companions and quietly said: “Comrade Bakdāsh has given proof of his Bolshevism!”[93]

25

THE COMMUNISTS AND THE QUESTION OF PALESTINE

On 14 May 1947, in a statement before the United Nations General Assembly, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko declared that “the legitimate interests of both the Jewish and Arab populations [of Palestine] can be duly safeguarded only through the establishment of an independent, dual, democratic, homogeneous Arab-Jewish state,” but added that “if this plan proved impossible to implement. . . , then it would be necessary to consider the second plan. . . which provides for the partition of Palestine into two independent autonomous states, one Jewish and one Arab.”[1] Five months later, on 13 October, S. Tsarapkin, the Soviet delegate at the U.N., maintained that the relations between Arabs and Jews had become so tense that their points of view could no longer be reconciled and that, therefore, the partition plan offered “more hope of realization.”[2]

These words and the vote that the Soviet government cast on November 29–together with the United States and other powers–in favor of the plan signified a clear break with the position that it had occupied on the question of Zionism for the previous three decades–that is, since the founding of the Soviet regime–and, from the standpoint of the overwhelming majority of the indigenous people of Palestine, involved a denial of their right to determine their own fate; a shifting against them of the consequences of Europe’s inhumaneness to Jewry; and the alienation of the more fertile and bigger portion of their country–56.5 percent of its land area–to a community that formed less than one-third of the population, held only one-sixth of the cultivable area, and 5.7 percent of the total land area, and consisted, in its eight-tenths, of recent migrants from Europe.[3]

The abrupt renunciation by the Soviet Union of its old policy produced shock, bewilderment, and disarray in the ranks of the Communists in Iraq. They had all along been educated in the spirit of “enmity to the Zionist

movement and to the idea of a Zionist national home in Arab Palestine."[4] Even the Jewish members of the party, who had regarded Zionism as "a danger to the Jews,"[5] were perplexed. They themselves had, on 29 May 1946, sent an appeal to the head of the Soviet government:

> We beseech you, Comrade Stalin, [they wrote] to lend support to the cause of Palestine when it comes before the United Nations. . . . The right of its Arab people to independence is unambiguous and their question is unrelated to the plight of the Jewish displaced persons. We are confident that your government whose principles and foreign policy rest on respect for the right of the peoples to self-determination will side with the Arabs in their tribulation.[6]

At first the Communists refused to abandon their old formulas or to bow down to the new Soviet view. "The attitude that the Soviet Union has taken toward partition," affirmed the party command in December 1947 in an internal directive,

> has afforded the mercenary newspapers and the hirelings of the imperialists an opportunity to defame not only the Soviet Union but also the Communist movement in the Arab countries. . . .
>
> It is necessary, therefore, for the Communist party to define its position as regards Palestine in terms of the lines to which it has adhered and which may be summarized as follows:
>
> a) Zionism is a movement that is racist, religious, reactionary, and false to the Jewish masses. . . .
>
> b) Jewish immigration . . . does not solve the problems of displaced Jews in Europe but is an organized invasion directed by the Jewish Agency . . . and its continuation in its present form . . . threatens the original inhabitants in their livelihood and freedom.
>
> c) The partition of Palestine is an old imperialist project . . . which rests on the presupposed impossibility of an understanding between Jews and Arabs. . . .
>
> d) The form of government for Palestine can rightfully be determined only by the Palestinian people, by the people who live

actually in Palestine, and not by the United Nations or any other organization or state or group of states. . . .

e) Partition is bound to lead to the subordination of the Arab majority to the Zionist minority in the proposed Jewish state.

f) Partition and the creation of the Jewish state will increase racial and religious enmities and will affect seriously the prospects of peace in the Middle East.

For all these reasons the Communist party categorically rejects the partition plan. . . [7]

Al-Asās, a legal newspaper which served as the party's mouthpiece from 18 March 1948 till its suppression in the following June, steered its course for upwards of two months in the light of this directive. Its central slogan ran: "Sons of Our People! Struggle for the Preservation of the Arabism of Palestine and the Defeat of the Project for a Zionist State!"[8] However, on 24 May of that year it suddenly dropped this formula and began marking time, but not without deploring the "political rigidity" in the Arab position.[9] In the end, on 6 July 1948, the Communist command fell into line with Soviet policy and took for its guiding idea "the establishment of an independent democratic Arab state in the Arab part of Palestine."[10]

But what considerations had been influencing the attitude of the Soviet government? Upon this subject a number of conjectures are possible, but it is more useful to have recourse to testimony in available diplomatic correspondence. "I had a long discussion," wrote the Syrian U.N. representative to his foreign ministry on November 4, 1947, "with the head of the Soviet delegation and his assistants. Eventually he told me that they had supported the establishment of a Jewish state because they expect less good from the Arabs than from the Jews and claimed that most of the Arab states have thrown themselves into the arms of the Anglo-Saxons."[11] The Syrian chargé d'affaires in Moscow was more specific. He laid the blame upon

the unfriendliness of most Arab governments to the Soviets and the Communist parties; their participation in blocs, as that of Ankara-Baghdād-'Ammān; . . . their signing of English-influenced treaties aimed at the encirclement of the Soviet Union; the false belief current

> among a large number of Arabs that support by the Soviets is assured in any case; the ensuing neglect to cultivate their goodwill; the turning of cooperation with them in the international arena into a matter of mere threat and the declaration of responsible Arab bodies that it is a cooperation with the devil and, in respect to this, the Soviets are very sensitive.

The chargé d'affaires had additional explanations. He said that Moscow expected that its new policy would shake the position of England in the East and hasten her departure from Palestine and, over and above this, produce a more favorable mood among Jewish voters toward the candidacy of Henry Wallace in the approaching American presidential elections. He further maintained that the Soviets had "high hopes" that "the Jewish Communist party would transform Zionist capitalism in Palestine into a Communist state."[12]

But what reasons did the Communists themselves provide for Moscow's change of orientation? "It is a matter for regret," read a statement issued by "the Arab Democratic Committee in Paris" on June 11, 1948, and circulated among party members in Iraq in the month of August, "that progressive Arabs did not understand at the time the attitude that the Soviet Union took with regard to the partition plan. . . . Some wasted and are still wasting their time in a futile search for the 'opportunist' and 'circumstantial-tactical' motives behind this attitude." The Palestine question, the statement went on, was not a purely Arab or a purely Jewish, but an "international" question. It was also "a question that is derivative and not fundamental, relative and not absolute: it is subject to the requirements of the general struggle against the international capitalist-imperialist system." The statement regarded as unfortunate that "a considerable number of Arab democrats" should have been unmindful of this principle or of the fact that "the battleground of this general struggle is the world in its entirety," or should have forgotten that "to expel imperialism from any one country *now and at once not tomorrow* is a victory for the progressive camp." As regards the Jews in Palestine, the statement emphasized that

> the question before us is not the Balfour Declaration [of 1917] . . . which is indisputably unjust. . . but the definition of our attitude

> towards the hundreds of thousands of Jews that have since migrated to Palestine. . . and who form in fact an independent unit with its own rules, language, and aspirations . . . and among whom can be seen–aside from . . . exploiters, our enemies everywhere–workmen, peasants, and artisans, our friends everywhere. This new Israeli people . . . has the right to determine its fate.

In conclusion, the statement, which bore the title "Light on the Palestine Question," called upon "Arab democrats and patriots" not to fight but to uphold the partition plan and, more than that, "not to oppose the new Israeli people as a whole . . . but to support the progressive and patriot Jewish forces to enable them to take power in the new 'Israeli state'. . . and to put an end . . . to Zionism or Jewish reaction."[13]

In the Communist records there are references connecting with this statement Yūsuf Ismā'īl, an Iraqi Communist long resident in Paris, [14] but it is not clear whether he was its real inspirer. At any rate, its circulation in the Iraqi underground disquieted rather than convinced many of the basic organizers of the party, the more so as the statement identified the extremist right-wing terrorist Stern and Irgun groups as "progressive organizations" and contained such extravagant and patently false assertions as the one crediting the "progressive parties" in Palestine with "the support of 75 percent of the Jewish people." In the ranks there were criticisms, protests, and, worse than this, a stepping away from the party. Anxiously a member of the cadre reproached the command: "How did the party permit itself to circulate a statement on a question whose intricacies it has insufficiently grasped?"[15] It is significant that when the statement ultimately reached the prison of Kūt and one of the members of the Communist Prison Organization began reading it aloud in the prison *qāwūsh*,[16] Fahd, after listening to a few passages, ordered him to desist.[17]

But it was 'Azīz Sharīf, the future recipient of the Lenin Peace Award, who expressed openly what many members and supporters of the party really felt. He had anticipated the arguments of the Paris statement and had said at the end of May:

> It is not admissible that we should derive our position on national issues from that of the Soviet Union . . . or that we should view a

> policy of a state like the Soviet Union as inspired in all eventualities by considerations of principle. . . . Hasn't the Soviet Union passed over in silence the suppression of Azerbaijān by the government of Iran . . . ? Hasn't it established economic and political relations with the government of Chiang Kai-shek alone when its sympathies were with the movement inimical to that government? . . .
>
> The Soviet Union is a state that acts and reacts in an international [power] situation and formulates its policies in the light of that situation with its contradictions and complications. . . . Were we to accept without question each and every policy that it sees fit to adopt . . . , we would arouse distrust in the national movement among the masses of the people. . . .
>
> The state of Israel has been set up by an act of aggression and on the basis of the forcible seizure of Palestine from its rightful people. . . .
>
> If our resistance to Zionism was correct . . . before it reached its goals, why do they forbid us to resist it after its goals had been achieved? Actually, the declaration of the state of Israel is but the first [?] practical step towards their realization.[18]

Eventually the Paris statement of 11 June 1948 was repudiated. "Some suspicious elements," said the Central Committee of the Communist party in a report issued in September of 1956, "succeeded [in 1948] in insinuating into the ranks of our party and our movement a number of erroneous concepts with respect to Zionism . . . among which were the destructive ideas that found expression in the statement entitled 'Light on the Palestine Question.'"[19]

In retrospect, it is quite evident that Moscow's pro-Israeli orientation of 1947-1948 was a mistake, even purely from the standpoint of the interests of the Soviet peoples. The proof lies in its episodic character: it had to be abandoned within less than two years. It is reasonable, therefore, to infer that it proceeded from premises which had a tenuous factual basis. To be more explicit, it would appear that the policy was founded, first, on an inadequate appreciation of the intimate links between Zionism and Jewish capital, and between Jewish capital and capitalism in the West; second, on an overestimation of the strength and possibilities of the Jewish left, at least in Palestine; third, on a lack of sensitivity to the moods and impulses of

broad segments of the Arab people and on an insufficient awareness of the widening chasm dividing them from their traditional, Western-influenced rulers. In other words, the potential for change inherent in the Arab situation, which the Palestine tragedy merely accelerated,[20] would seem to have remained largely outside Moscow's field of vision. It could, of course, be argued that the creation of the state of Israel greatly sharpened the internal tensions in Arab societies and at the same time made possible the powerful presence that the Soviet Union ultimately achieved in the Arab East, but it is very doubtful that the decision makers in Moscow foresaw these consequences in 1947. Such farsightedness would have demanded a different line of conduct–at the minimum, a sitting on the fence–the more so as the objective circumstances and the contemporary correlation of forces, on both the local and international levels, were such that the state of Israel would in all probability have come into existence, at least *de facto*, irrespective of how the Soviets behaved.

At any rate, Moscow's policy had a very detrimental effect upon the Communists in Iraq. It weakened their authority among Arab workmen, disoriented and demoralized their supporters, tangibly reduced their ranks, and created the psychological preconditions for the ruthless suppression by the police of their cadres and organizations. Moscow's policy became in effect the principal weapon of the government against the party and its sympathizers.

26

THE CHARACTER, SCOPE, AND FORMS OF PARTY ACTIVITY

Party activity was by no means an indivisible whole. The acts of the party, in other words, were not all clearly related to one another or to a conscious ultimate end. Some of its acts were more manifestations of instinct than of calculation, others were mere reactions to the acts of its adversaries or to the pressures of the prevailing moment. Sometimes the party pursued immediate advantages for their own sake and without a thought for distant objectives; sometimes, because of lack of discernment, these objectives were prejudiced rather than advanced by the action taken. All the same, much of the activity of the party can best be understood in terms of the principal aims that the party set before itself.

In the forties, access to state power could not, of course, he said to have been an operative object of party action. Power was simply not within its reach. All that the party could hope for was to make relatively limited conquests: to establish bridgeheads in sensitive places–in the schools, colleges, large-scale enterprises, the army, and the official apparatus of the state. The conquests, once realized, were subordinated to other short-term ends. What these ends were depended on the living situation of the party. Thus, while in the period 1942-1944, by reason of the Anglo-Soviet alliance, the party acted with a view to the immediate advantage of the English, in the period 1945-1948, with the change in world conditions, it acted with a view to their ultimate ruin. As toward the English, so toward the government of Iraq which, in Communist eyes, had only a derivative significance. Congruently, in the first period the accent of the party was on reform, in the second–from 1946–on revolution.[1] By revolution, no swift coup or major threat was intended. That was beyond the party's means. The *Wathbah* of 1948, it will be remembered, was unplanned and unforeseen. The party thought in altogether different terms. It aimed not at the sudden

overthrow of Iraq's rulers but, by repeated minor blows, at harassing and distracting them, at entangling them in a chain of repressive acts, alienating them further from the people, and gradually wearing our their will and their physical powers.

In pursuing its ends, the party worked on an ideological and a practical plane. With its ideological efforts it hoped to infuse communism into the flesh and blood of the intelligentsia and the laboring classes or, at least, to connect their needs, feelings, and life experience with Communist conclusions. To such efforts, much Communist energy was devoted in the years 1941-1943, when the party was still too feeble to assert itself on the practical level. Not only illegal but also legal channels were used: the frank expositions of the party organ, *Ash-Sharārah* ("The Spark")–later *Al-Qā'idah* ("The Base")-were supplemented by the less obvious arguments of the licensed journals *Al-Majal-lah* ("The Journal") and *Al-Muthul-il-'Ulyā* ("The Lofty Principles")–and later of *Al-' Us bah* ("The League") and *Al-Asās* ("The Foundation"). The party's practical struggle–after 1943–took partly an economic form: the party combined the workers in unions, led them in strikes, and strove to better their conditions of existence, winning them over in the process to its cause: at least twelve out of the sixteen workers' unions authorized in 1944-1945 were under the direct control of the party; the drafts of their program were in Fahd's own handwriting. But the most fundamental form of the party's practical struggle was, of course, political. This in part manifested itself in direct action: in the period 1946-1948, when the party threw down the standard of reform and took up that of revolution, it organized either through its own primary units or through its auxiliaries–the League Against Zionism, the Party of National Liberation, the Friends of the Peasants' Societies, the Students' Federations, and the Permanent Bureau of Labour Unions–collective protests, public meetings, mass demonstrations, one peasant rising,[2] one "great march,"[3] and workers' and students' strikes, and contributed palpably to the completion of the *Wathbah*.[4] However, the more distinctive, more usual, and surer method of the party's advance was not that of action but of penetration. Penetration occurred gradually and secretly: the party remained unseen, intangible, and could not be easily hit or countered. Action, on the other hand, exposed the party sometimes to great risks: in the Communist demonstrations, for example, the spearhead, the guard on both sides, the shouters of slogans, the

holders of banners, the messengers linking the "internal command" to the "external command,"[5] were more often than not members or at least "organized supporters" of the party, and their arrest could have led to the uncovering of numerous cells and perhaps to irreparable loss. For a time in late 1948 and early 1949 the inexperienced and "unauthorized" committees[6] were so action-happy that they well-nigh brought the party to complete ruin.

The party engaged in one other form of activity, one essentially of a protective nature and pursued exclusively against the political police. This was a special type of struggle, which was conducted sometimes in ingenious ways by both sides. At one point, Bahjat ʻAṭiyyah, the chief of the police, toyed even with the idea of creating a bogus Communist party. "With a view to countering the existing Communist organization," he wrote in a confidential memorandum,

> it would be useful to set up a rival Communist party which would have a clandestine paper of its own. . . . Agents would run it along determined lines and in such a way as to conceal its true nature. . . . It should aim at attracting Communists and others of similar leanings so that they could be brought to justice. . . . It should adopt a hostile attitude toward the existing Communist party . . . and dispute its theories and its writings in the name of Marxism.[7]

It is not clear whether Bahjat ʻAṭiyyah later put his idea into practice-in mid-1949 four organizations vied with the bona fide Communist party in the underground–but for the time being he was dissuaded from it. "This is an excellent scheme," commented P. B.Ray, a British intelligence officer,

> but very very difficult to work. Unless it is absolutely certain that its true nature can be kept secret it is better, judging by experience gained elsewhere, not to make the attempt. Failure only adds strength to the Communists. On the whole it is better to rely on a system of infiltration into the Communist party of a number of reliable and trained agents. When the police manage to arrest a number of Communists it is advisable to try and win over one or two of the lesser known of these. They should then be tried and sentenced with the other

> accused, allowed to serve their term of imprisonment and reintroduced into the party after their release. It may be some years thereafter before these agents rise to the top of the party but in the course of time they should become very valuable sources of information.[8]

Thus, in their war against the Communists, the police came to rely basically on the same technique as that of the party: penetration. They had surely used this technique earlier, in the thirties, but in a crude and amateurish fashion. Now they became more polished, more sophisticated. Their characteristic practice was the employment of parallel agents, no one of whom was aware of the existence of the other. By way of counter-measure, the Communists appear to have planted on the police double agents, that is, agents who were really in their service, and to have succeeded at times in confusing the authorities by putting out conflicting reports or partly true, partly false, or wholly spurious information.

All the forms of Communist activity discussed in the foregoing pages were in a sense unified by *Al-Qā'idah (Ash-Sharārah* prior to 1943), a monthly and the only official organ of the party. In the conditions of the underground, *Al-Qā'idah* was not merely the most important instrument of the party's agitation, or the chief transmitter of its theories, or the focal means of expression for its literary forces, but also the principal medium through which the experience of its individual organizations was shared, their practices developed and systematized, and the oneness and continuity of the party made certain.

As is clear from Table 26-1, in 1947-1948–or to be more precise, in the period extending from June 1947 to September 1948[9]–when the party was at a high point of its influence, *Al-Qā'idah* printed 3,000 copies. This may seem on a first glance insignificant, but few of the legal papers or periodicals of Iraq could claim a bigger circulation. Moreover, the actual number of readers was a great deal larger, as the journal passed from hand to hand. If insufficient, the figures in the table furnish, nonetheless, an index not only to the relative intensity of *Al-Qā'idah's* efforts in the various provinces or in the capital's urban districts, but also to the geographical–and in a partial sense to the occupational–distribution of at least the *literate* members and supporters of the party.[10] Of course, a greater supply of *Al-*

Qā‘idah in one province than in another may not reflect only a greater demand for the paper, that is, a greater degree of actual support for the party, but also a desire on the part of the leadership for greater party gains; the extent of such gains at any one point is, however, ultimately limited by the gains already achieved. At any rate, it is plain that the deepest penetration of *Al-Qā‘idah* was in the discontented Kurdish provinces of Arbīl and Sulaimāniyyah, and within Greater Baghdād among the students–the most numerous and most sensitive section of the Iraqi intelligentsia. The progress or effort of the paper was also marked in Baṣrah, Iraq's gateway to the sea, and in the Shī‘ī and feudally infested provinces of Kūt, Muntafiq, and ‘Amārah; but pitiably inadequate in the Sunnī town of Mosul,[11] and completely nonexistent in the Sunnī northern districts of the province of Baghdād or in Sunnī Dulaim. Similarly, within Baghdād itself the advance of *Al-Qa' idah* was more pronounced in Shī‘ī al-Kādhimiyyah than in Sunnī al-Aḍhamiyyah. These are the more significant conclusions that can be drawn from the table. Obviously, the relatively small number of copies allotted to the workers is indicative neither of the degree of interest the party took in them nor of the degree of influence it enjoyed in their midst, but must be attributed in the first place to their generally low state of literacy. The same factor also accounted for the meager quota of the army: the party addressed itself primarily to the soldiers and noncommissioned officers.

TABLE 26-1

Distribution in 1947-1948 of Al- Qa'idah, Organ of the Iraqi Communist Party

Place	No. of copies	% in Greater Baghdād	% of grand total	Population of qiṭa'[a] as % of population of Greater Baghdād	Urban population of area or province as % of total 1947 urban population of Iraq
Greater Baghdād					
Qiṭā's[a]					
Northern	300	21.8		60.1	
Southern	300	21.8			
Al-Karkh	100	7.2		19.0	
Al-Aḍhamiyyah	50	3.6		11.4	
Al-Kāḍhimiyyah	90	6.5		9.5	
Schools and colleges					
Trade schools (90)					
Secondary schools (180)	410	29.7[b]			
Colleges (140)					
Workers	90	6.5[c]			
Armenians	10	.7			
Army[d]	30	2.2			
Total Greater Baghdād	1,380	100.0	46.0	100.0	31.5
Provinces[e]					
Southern Party Zone					
Baṣrah	280		9.3		8.7
Muntafiq	120		4.0		3.5
'Amārah	100		3.3		3.9
Kurdish Branch					
Kirkūk	140[f]		4.7		6.0
Sulaimāniyyah	240[f]		8.0		3.6
Arbīl	240[f]		8.0		3.1
Provinces under the party center at Baghdād					
Karbalā'	60		2.0		6.1
Ḥillah	80		2.7		4.6
Diyālah	40		1.3		3.3
Dīwāniyyah	40		1.3		5.1
Kūt	140		4.7		3.1
Mosul	140		4.7		12.9
Provinces with no party organizations					
Dulaim	–		–		2.4
Province of Baghdād outside Greater Baghdād	–		–		2.2
Grand Total	3,000		100.0		100.0

[a]*Qitā's:* sectors into which Greater Baghdād was divided for purposes of party activity.

[b]College and secondary and trade school students totaled 15,173, i.e., 2.9 percent of the population of Greater Baghdād.

[c]Industrial and transport workers probably totaled about 30,000, i.e., about 5.8 percent of the population of Greater Baghdād.

[d]Only the initial "A" (in Arabic) appeared in Communist manuscript.

[e]For the sectarian and ethnic characteristics of provinces, see Table 27-2.

[f]Most probably include figures for distribution of *Azādī*, the Kurdish edition of *Al-Qā'idah*.

Source: Communist manuscript in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

This pattern *Al Al-Qā'idah's* penetration related *only* to the period June 1947-September 1948, and cannot be taken as necessarily characteristic, in the instance of each and every province or urban sector, of any preceding or succeeding period. The point cannot be emphasized sharply enough in view of the basic instability and the abrupt ebbs and flows in the fortunes of the party and of its individual organizations.

Thus far in this chapter, we have only cast light on the activities of the party in a general way. We must now descend to particulars and will begin by focusing briefly on Communist work among the peasantry.

On other pages much has been said about the conditions of Iraq's cultivators in the period of the monarchy. Here it would suffice to bring out a few additional points more directly pertinent to our present discussion. The great majority of the peasants were, it will be remembered, tribal sharecroppers of nomadic or seminomadic origin, and had only relatively recently settled down. Their connection with the land was, therefore, weak and unpassionate. It followed also that they had no such thing as a deep-rooted sense of property. Moreover, having been once free-living nomads, they were far from docile or submissive, and had not yet come to consider as given the change in their life–a change from which their overlord the shaikh alone derived benefit: they themselves were sinking into a status akin to that of serfs, and now hovered on the margin of existence. Add to this that their mode of life did not really isolate them from one another: they did not live in the fields in a scattered condition, but were concentrated in villages.[12] This brought them continually into mutual intercourse, and made for some consciousness of common interests, or at least facilitated the promotion of such a consciousness. One other most significant thing is that many of these peasants, being ex-warriors, were armed. This rendered it all the more necessary from the point of view of the authorities, especially in the circumstances of the forties, to shut them off from any unsettling urban influences–a physical impossibility, to be sure, although the subjection of tribal peasants directly to their shaikhs rather than to the official apparatus

of the state and their virtual exclusion from the purview of the national law helped toward that purpose.

This was essentially the situation that the Communist party faced in the countryside. Its details and potentialities were grasped only by degrees: the party was in its beginnings, it will be recalled, made up exclusively of townspeople. In fact, at first the peasants stood totally outside the Communist range of vision. In *Ash-Sharārah*, the party's organ for the years 1940-1942, there is scarcely a passing reference to them. It was not until the March 1944 First Party Conference that their question was placed upon the order of the day. Instructions were then sent out to party cells in areas nearest to villages, requiring a close study of their problems and conditions of life.[13] Subsequently plans were drawn out to bring them within the orbit of party activity. For spearhead, the party chose the rural schoolteachers; for means, informal and heart-to-heart conversations; for immediate aim, the creation of nuclei of peasant-Communists. It gained its first footing among Āl-Azairij, a composite, rice-cultivating tribe that lived in the province of ʻAmārah along the Majarr as-Ṣaghīr, and to the west of the Tigris. Its first peasant convert was Fiʻl Ḍamad, a laborer of Āl-Azairij and an *ex-sirkāl*[14] who had been ousted from his land by Majīd al-Khalīfah, a shaikh of the powerful Albu Muḥammad tribe.[15] Fi'l Damad,[16] still burning with the sense of an injustice, surrendered himself wholeheartedly to the party. News of him reached Fahd, who called him to Baghdād and tutored him personally in the methods of agitation and underground work. Fi'l Ḍamad reeked of the land, and one of his kind was of more worth to the party in the countryside than a whole string of rural teachers. The hopes set on him were not disappointed. Thanks to his energy and familiarity with peasant ways, the slogans of the party penetrated into many of the *salafs*[17] of ʻAmārah, and before long not a few of these *salafs* had cells and masʻūls[18] of their own. Captured party papers indicate that the Communists also succeeded in implanting themselves in the villages of Buhruz and Zuhairāt in Diyālah, Barzinjah and ʻArbat in Sulaimāniyyah, ʻAinkāwah and Jatinḥākah in Arbīl, and Ḥuwaijah in Kirkūk province–in other words, in areas where tenure of land by shaikh, āgha, or town *mallāk* was of a most parasitic character. In all these villages, as in ʻAmārah, the party created Friends of the Peasants' Societies with the avowed aims of enlightening the peasants as to their rights and interests, encouraging them to form

cooperative organizations, offering them social, legal, and hygienic advice, and, above all, consummating a union between them and the "good people"[19] of the towns.[20] In 1944 and 1945 the societies had a purely reformist and legalist character. This accorded with the general line of party policy and with the National Charter, which was adopted at the March 1944 party conference, and which did not go beyond demands for freeing the peasants from oppressive rents and the distribution to them of state lands without charge.[21]

Communist work in the countryside remained essentially of a preparatory nature even after 1946, when the party abruptly altered its general course and committed itself unambiguously to revolutionary struggle. In most of the villages where it had put down roots, it was simply not yet strong enough for militant action. Precipitate action would have surely spoiled everything. Only at ʻArbat, a village in the Kurdish province of Sulaimāniyyah, did it summon the peasants to a rising against their shaikh, and the summons grew irresistibly out of the local events.

ʻArbat, which had 801 inhabitants in 1947, lies in the valley of Tanjaro, twenty-five kilometers to the southeast of Sulaimāniyyah, and serves as a religious center for sixty-nine of the surrounding villages. In the Ottoman period, all its lands belonged to its peasants except for seven plots which had been set apart for the maintenance of the local dervish oratory. After World War I, Shaikh Maḥmūd, a *sayyid*,[22] a member of the Barzinjah family–the most powerful in southern Kurdistan–and the spiritual leader of the Qādirī dervish brotherhood at Sulaimāniyyah,[23] gradually succeeded, by virtue of his religious influence and without a ground of right, in taking possession of the entire village. Years later–in the early forties–Shaikh Maḥmūd distributed his numerous holdings among his sons, and the village of ʻArbat fell to the share of Shaikh Laṭīf. The latter was not as prudent or as easily contented as his father. Instead of collecting simply the customary tithe, which varied between one-twentieth and one-tenth of the produce, he imposed on the peasants a variety of other dues, including a marriage fee, a grazing charge, and a heavy water tax, which absorbed as much as one-third of the yield of the land. No less galling were the corvées by which he exacted forced and unpaid labor. Voices raised in protest were summarily silenced by his men-at-arms.

Such was the state of things when in 1945 the Communist party established its first bridgehead in the village. As can be imagined, it derived rapid advantage from the abuses by which the shaikh lived. Moreover, as the authorities seemed utterly indifferent to the plight of the peasants, the party had no difficulty in being accepted by them before long as their only bulwark against oppression. The party gave, of course, a generalized expression to their bitter feelings, fertilized these feelings with Communist ideas, and promised, if only they could band together, a conclusion of their problems far more favorable than any they had dared to hope. In November 1947, it brought them from suppressed resentment to open action. The peasants now refused to take any further orders from the shaikh's overseers, and boldly beat them up and expelled them from the village. Incensed, the shaikh hurriedly despatched one of his lieutenants with a written warning which was read in the local mosque, and in which the peasants were peremptorily enjoined to return to reason or expect the worst. Seeing that the warning went unheeded, the shaikh gathered four hundred of his armed men, swooped down upon the village, and had the mutinous peasants flogged one by one before their children and womenfolk. The party spread word of this happening in every direction, and ordered all its cells in southern Kurdistan to rouse popular sympathy on behalf of the afflicted village. In Sulaimāniyyah, a party stronghold, dense crowds led by Communist agitators marched through the streets demanding that the cause of the peasants be rescued and made triumphant. Simultaneously, petitions rained upon the authorities appealing for official measures against the shaikh and the assignment of legal title to 'Arbat's rightful owners. By all these moves, the Communists sought to convey to the peasants that by relying on the party they were relying on a force that reached far and could make its will felt in their interests. Shortly thereafter, a land settlement committee appeared on the scene, conducted a careful investigation, and upheld the right of the peasants to the land. But this made little difference. Instead of yielding, the shaikh tightened his grip on the village and flouted the authority of the government. The law remained inert and helpless. State justice could not be effectively set in motion when the shaikhs were the offenders, the party now told the peasants. At this juncture the *Wathbah* of January 1948 broke out. The whole political climate changed. Delegations, under orders from the party, moved from province to province and between

town and village exciting the people and rousing them to general protests. At ‘Arbat the party built up fervor by organizing frequent peasant meetings. In April, after ceaseless pressure and in pursuance of instructions from the emergency government at Baghdād, the *mutasarrif*[24] of Sulaimāniyyah officially ordered the shaikh to leave the village in peace and to desist once and for all from any interference in its affairs. The shaikh still did not own defeat. He now cut off the peasants’ water supply. This led to more disputes, which soon thickened into nightly armed clashes between the peasants and the shaikh’s men. Although access to the water sources was regained, the fields of the village were now and anon raided and its crops burned. In the autumn of 1948 a new factor supervened: the cells of the party at ‘Arbat, as at Sulaimāniyyah and in most of Iraq, were uncovered and smashed. Without the Communists to guide them, and yielding to the intercession of the men of religion on behalf of the shaikh, the peasants agreed to a compromise. The shaikh recognized their right to the land. In return they promised to surrender to him one-eighth of the produce as charge for their use of ‘Arbat’s water, which he continued to claim as his own. All other dues or impositions were forgone.[25]

The events at ‘Arbat are historically significant, not only because they reveal the party in its first active role on the village level, but more importantly because they add up to the first uprising of its kind in the Iraqi countryside–an uprising against the landed shaikh instead of under his leadership–and in this sense set the tone to the fervid, if intermittent, agrarian unrest of the fifties.

If in the country the Communists were, at the time of the ‘Arbat uprising, generally still in the process of building up strength, in the towns they already constituted a vigorous and authoritative revolutionary force. Their strongest anchorage, from the point of view of numbers but not necessarily of constancy of faith, lay in the thick of the students. This came about in spite of the party, rather than by its choice. In the forties, no other stratum of the population was as compact, as dynamic, or as articulate as the students. Consistently enough, they provided the spearhead of all oppositional aspirations. Of course, in the Communist theoretical scheme they at no time figured as the veritable social base of the party. This was a role assigned irrevocably and forever to the proletariat. Nonetheless, in the

view of the party, the greater number of students and of educated youth approximated the skilled workers in their economic conditions, and were the natural carriers of "national and progressive" values to the mass of young proletarians.[26] The party spared, therefore, no effort to draw as many of them as possible into the political struggle. To keep the students out of politics, as the government wished, was to deprive them of their civil rights, and meant in practice much the same as keeping them on the side of the existing order, the party insisted.[27] Besides, in the Iraqi conditions of the forties to attempt to depoliticize the students was like attempting to change the leopard's spots.

The degree of direct party gains in the ranks of the students and the remote and immediate factors accounting for these gains have been discussed elsewhere at some length. Light has also been shed on the important part played by the students in the various battles of the party, and especially in the *Wathbah*. How party students were organized has likewise been explained. But one aspect of party activity remains to be treated. As is common Communist practice, the Iraqi Communists did not only endeavor to win students to the party, that is, to turn them into Communists, but also to mobilize the mass of nonparty students for party ends. The earliest expedients used for the purpose were the "Cultural Committees" which were set up in 1944-1945 in various colleges and schools. The objects of these committees, as set forth in their open declarations, were "to spread the spirit of culture among the students, further scientific criticism . . . , encourage free thought, . . . promote patriotic feelings . . . and develop cultural links between the students of Iraq, the youth of brotherly Arab countries, and the democratic youth abroad," The means to be employed were the issuance of special student circulars, the holding of "cultural" gatherings, the exchange of correspondence and leaflets with movements in other countries, and the organization of "cultural-scientific" trips to foreign lands and to the factories, farms, law-courts, museums, and banks of Iraq.[28] But the question which the committees immediately posed was that of assembling a national student congress. Petitions in this sense, prepared on the instructions of the party and submitted to the authorities in 1945, led only to the arrest and imprisonment of the chief petitioners.[29] Although subsequently the party gave a concentrated character to its campaign for a congress, its efforts did not bear fruit until April 1948, three months after

the *Wathbah*. Student unions had shortly before sprung up in sixty of Iraq's colleges and secondary and intermediate schools. Fifty-one agreed to send delegates to the congress; the other nine, which were dominated by the nationalists, came out against its convocation.[30] Leftists of all shades–National Democrats, National Unionists, and Populists–lent their support, but the threads were in the hands of the Communist party. Denied a license by the government, the congress defiantly assembled in the open Alī under Baghdād's sun in the "Field of Lions" (al-Hāshimī Field) on April 14. The attendance was estimated at from 5,000 to 6,000 by party sources.[31] After listening to several speeches and to an ode by Iraq's poet laureate, Muḥammad Mahdī aj-Jawāhirī, the assembly passed a resolution creating the general Union of Iraqi students (GUIS) with the tasks of solving student problems, "tying the student question to the social question," and mobilizing the students "in the service of independence and democracy and against imperialism." The Congress proceeded to appoint a permanent Executive Committee with Ja'far al-Labbān, a Communist, a twenty-one-year-old Shī'ī from Ḥillah, and a student of the Higher Teachers' Training College, as president. Of the twenty-three members of the committee, twelve were Communists. The Communists also dominated in the GUIS Secretariat: they occupied five of the seven places. Among the Communist secretaries was Hādī Hāshim, who would in 1958 rise to membership of the Politbureau of the party.[32]

The GUIS, which soon affiliated with the International Union of Students, became the main instrument of the party's student policy–but not for long, having not survived the sudden disaster that overtook the party in the autumn of 1948.

Although the party found its thickest backing in the ranks of the students, it was not with the students, but with the workers, that it concerned itself most. There was always, it should be remembered, a shade of reserve in the attitude of its leader, Fahd, toward the students of the middle class. With many of them, communism–he feared–was more of a distraction, a whim, than an enduring commitment. Besides, in terms of the ideas that he had imbibed, it was not on account of the students but of the workers that the party existed. To the workers, therefore, he persistently turned for genuine and stable support. However, unlike the students who came to the party

often of themselves, the workers had to be sought out, and could be won over only with difficulty, at least at the beginning. This was due, in part, to the fact that they had not yet begun to live politically; and, in part, to their instinctive distrust of the intelligentsia which, in the early stages, dominated the party through and through. What have these people got to do with us? the workers probably thought. Indeed, only Fahd and a handful of Communists had then any conception of the workers or of their life or knew how to speak to them, let alone how to win their confidence.

However, after 1942, as the workers began to feel the rough edge of the wartime inflation, they showed more receptivity to the thoughts of the Communists. Moreover, men of their own class–ʻAlī Shukur, a worker on the railway for upward of fourteen years, and ʻAbd-Tamr, a mechanic of peasant origin–now led the party's agitators. ʻAlī Shukur and ʻAbd-Tamr lived and breathed with the workers, suffered as they did, and talked of their problems from knowledge rather than from fancy. Gradually, active nuclei of worker-Communists formed around them, and the advance of the party became smoother and more noticeable.

As a rule, the party did not take much notice of the workmen in the numerous handicraft establishments operating on traditional methods or in the modern small-scale industrial enterprises. It was still weak in its trained personnel, and could not afford to scatter its effort. More than that, in those undertakings the workers were often relatives, friends, or acquaintances of the proprietor, and still untouched by any class feeling, and thus not susceptible to Communist influence.

While not neglecting the few large native factories, the party concentrated the weight of its force in the colossal enterprises that were foreign-managed or foreign-owned, and were at the same time most vital to the country. More specifically, the party sought before everything else to convert the railways, the port of Baṣrah, and the oil fields into Communist fortresses. This constituted the key to its basic strategy.

The railways, which in December 1944 employed 9,634, and in December 1945 employed 10,801 skilled and unskilled workers,[33] were, in an administrative sense, separated from the rest of the country and came under a British director general with quasi-autonomous powers. On account of this fact, the feeling was widespread that the railways, even though Iraqi

owned, were an alien body. This helped in no little degree to smooth the path for the party.

Of course, the party infiltrated where it could: by the middle forties it succeeded in organizing cells at the Ma‘qil, Samāwah, Dīwāniyyah, Baghdād West, Baghdād North, Baghdād East, Kirkūk, and Jalawlā’ railway stations. But the greater part of its resources were brought to bear on the most fundamental point in the entire system, the railway workshops at Schalchiyyah. Here, four miles to the north of Baghdād West and on the right bank of the Tigris, were concentrated the main railway stores and all railway repair and maintenance work. Stoppage of activity in this place for ten to fifteen days would have brought the movement of trains in the whole of Iraq to a complete standstill. As the various shops–the founding shop, machine shop, boiler shop, etc.–complemented one another, and the crippling of one would have led sooner or later to the crippling of all the others, the party did not have to spread its forces: it focused on a key shop, the machine shop, which teemed with workers.[34] On Schalchiyyah the attention of the party would remain relentlessly riveted: to win solid influence at Schalchiyyah[35] meant, it was obvious, to be able to interfere decisively in the railways at all times.

The railwaymen attracted into the party were at first simply instructed to agitate for a railway union, and were kept steadily upon this course until September 7, 1944, when the union was at length licensed by the government. For the party, this was a significant step forward: it now possessed a legal means wherewith to widen and intensify the scope of its work. To strengthen the union in every possible way became its immediate preoccupation. Propagandists made the round of the workshops and the stations, summoning the workers to support the new organization. Simultaneously, party leaders made careful preparations for the union’s first congress, which eventually gathered in Baghdād on November 7, on the twenty-seventh anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. Sixty-four delegates representing 1,692 members, that is, 17.6 percent of all railway workers, attended the congress. Everything proceeded as the party calculated. The assembly elected a supervisory council of twelve and an administrative bureau of seven members. In the first body the Communists occupied ten, and in the second four places, including that of president of the union, which was filled by ‘Alī Shukur, who had by now risen to

membership of the Labor Committee attached to the Central Committee of the party.[36] The congress also approved a budget of 2,130 dīnārs[37] and accepted the union's charter which Fahd had prepared, and which committed the union to strive by "legal and correct means" to better the life conditions of the railway workers, to teach them to read and write, to raise their qualifications and technical skills, to educate them in the spirit of cooperation and mutual help, and to cultivate brotherly ties among them in the interests of the working class, the Iraqi homeland, and "international democracy."[38] The charter was in tune with current Communist policy, which allowed only peaceful forms of social struggle, and strictly precluded any direct conflict with the state.

In the months that followed, the party quietly expanded its bases. By early 1945, Communist nuclei in the railways had increased, and upwards of one-third of all railway workers had been drawn into the union.[39] At the same time, the party moderated or put brakes on the demands or complaints of the unionists. But this attitude did not last long. In April, the party abruptly switched its efforts into uncompromising channels. The change may have proceeded from new international facts: the world war was nearing its end and the deep contradictions between the victorious powers were slowly reasserting themselves. But the plight of the railway workers was only too real, and continued inaction would have led to loss of influence by the party. At any rate, on April 11, ʻAlī Shukur, the president of the union, demanded in the name of the workers raises of 50, 40, and 30 percent on day-wages of less than 200 fils,[40] of from 200 to 300 fils, and of more than 300 fils, respectively.[41]

TABLE 26-2

Schalchiyyah Railway Workshops' Strike
(15 April to 1 May 1945):
Day-to-day Changes in the Strike Curve as Indicative of the Degree and Intensity of Party Influence over the Schalchiyyah Workers

Date		Total no. of Schalchiyyah workers	Total no. of strikers
15 April 1945		1,265	1,225
16			1,229
17	(arrest of Administrative Bureau)		1,210
18			1,165
19			1,165
20			1,160
21			1,159
22			1,159
23			1,090
24	(threat to import Indian Labor)		905
25			951
26			909
27			909
28			807
29			697
30			121
1 May	(strike ends)		—

Source: Police File No. J 344 entitled "The Railway Workers' Union,"

Rebuffed, he ordered on April 15 an immediate national strike. The response was almost complete, but in the stations outside Baghdād the stoppage lasted only one or two days, that is, as long as union militants remained at large. However, at the crucial point, that is, at Schalchiyyah, where the party had penetrated deepest, the strike attained a high degree of solidity and persistence (see Table 26-2). Caught by surprise, the chief authority in the railways, Major General H. C. Smith, at first hesitated. On April 16, however, the workers who lived in mud huts opposite the Schalchiyyah workshops and depended upon the railways for water, found their supply cut off. [42] On the night of the 17th, on the orders of the *mutaṣarrif* (governor) of Baghdād, the union was suppressed and the members of its administration bureau arrested. On the 19th, Smith warned the strikers to resume work by the morning of the 21st or be considered "as having left the service of the railway without notice." All to no avail: except for few breakaways, the workmen remained firm. On the 22nd, Smith sounded a different note. "Your interests are our interests," he appealed, "therefore return to work and have confidence that the Administration . . . will improve your conditions as far as is reasonably possible."[43] No

response! On the 24th the word got round that Smith threatened to import Indian labor, which brought protests and much Baghdādī criticism.[44] Five days later, however, on a promise by the Ministry of Social Affairs of wage advances of 30, 25, and 20 percent, the strike quickly subsided. The party, which had insisted on the reinstatement of the union and the release of its leaders, could not keep the workers in line to the end. After the 28th, breakaways multiplied, the workers feared for their jobs and, from the point of view of the party, lost sense of their goal.[45] The short-lived Railway Union would not re-emerge until after the destruction of the monarchy.

If, as the Schalchiyyah experience showed, the party did not possess unlimited influence over the workers, it nonetheless remained an indubitable power in the railways. This is clearly corraborated by the testimony of the facts. Opposition from the party[46] was thus enough to frustrate the "Internal Labour Committees" set up in place of the closed union in May 1945 on the instructions of General Smith.[47] That great numbers of the railway-and especially the Schalchiyyah–workers continued to look to the party for guidance is also borne out by their ready obedience to the party's calls of 27 February 1946 and of 18 March, 14 April, and 12 May 1948 for strikes in support of additional wage increases or in furtherance of Communist interests, and by their massive response to its summons of 27 January 1948 to a direct grapple with the government of the day–a response which helped the *Wathbah* to seize the victory. The Communist party had succeeded in making itself so much a part of the life of the railway workers, and had learned to express so clearly the thoughts inarticulately stirring in their minds, that they now recognized themselves in the voice with which it spoke. It is perhaps worthy of note that in one demonstration–as a party organizer disapprovingly reported–"simple" workers, who were in an excited condition, broke unexpectedly into fierce shouts of "Long Live the Communist Party of the Railway Workers!"[48]

The party paid also very close attention to the workers at the port. The Baṣrah port, Iraq's sole outlet to the sea and the entryway for the supplies destined to the Ḥabbāniyyah and Shu'aybah bases, formed part of Britain's Near Eastern complex of economic and strategic interests and, like the railways, was administered by a semi-independent British directorate. Its workers were of a variety of types. They were not differentiated only into

skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled, or into casual and permanent laborers, but also into marine ratings, monthly laborers, day laborers, laborers on a contract, and laborers on a piece-work basis. But it is not so much this manifold division that made the workers difficult to combine, as the fact that the bulk of them were drawn from two rival tribes–Naṣṣār and Bahrakān. No little of the effort of the party was, therefore, consecrated to loosening the workers from their old tribal moorings and fastening them to new proletarian anchors.

Otherwise, the history of the party in the port largely paralleled its history in the railways: a concentrated campaign beginning in 1944 for a Port Workers' Union; the licensing of the union on 15 August 1945; the holding of the union's First Congress on 12 October, the election of a Council of Thirteen Supervisors, including seven Communists, and of an Administrative Bureau of eight, with seven Communists, and with a worker-Communist 'Abd-ul-Ḥasan aj-Jabbār as president; the enrolment by April 1946, according to party sources, of 3,125 workers in the union (about 60 percent of the total); the inevitable trial of strength with the alien Port Administration: a strike from 21 to 25 May 1947, followed by the arrest of the union leaders, the closing down of their quarters at Ma'qil,[49] and the expulsion of sixty-five agitator-workers from the port area; and finally the falling down of the curtain upon the union in the wake of the port strikes of 4 and 6 April and 2 May 1948.[50]

As could be expected, oil figured as prominently in the party's plans as in the calculations of Iraq's overlords. The oil industry, which in 1941 employed 3,137; in 1946, 12,753; and in 1948, 13,463 blue and white-collar Iraqi workers,[51] constituted, as a party directive put it, "the mother-monopoly of imperialism in Iraq," and had to be converted into a "mother-base" of the Communist movement.

With a view to making the best possible use of the limited means at its disposal, the party concentrated its attention on the Kirkūk oil fields, and on the point of bifurcation of the Kirkūk-Ḥaifa and the Kirktūk-Tripoli pipelines, the K3 pumping station near Ḥadīthah, although it did not neglect entirely the Baṣrah camps.

Once the party established a cellular network of sufficient strength, it proceeded-as at the port and in the railways-to agitate actively for a union. The campaign, begun in 1946, was led by Ḥannā Ilyās, a 23-year-old

Baghdādī, an ex-member of the Supervisory Council of the suppressed Railway Workers' Union,[52] a principal organizer of the 1945 Schalchiyyah workers' strike, and now an oil worker and a member of the Kirkūk local party committee. Ilyās was assisted by Ḥikmāt Fāris ar-Rubai'ī a twenty-year-old mechanic from Mandalī.[53]

The campaign for a union failed of its aim. It met with objection from the Iraqi Petroleum Company, which, however, permitted the formation on 13 June 1946 at Kirkūk of a toothless "Internal Labor Committee" under its own Mr. Todd, a staff director. How the members of this body were chosen is not altogether clear. The elective principle appears to have been applied in part, but not before a number of "trouble-makers" and "undesirable persons" had been expelled from the company. All the same, the Communists and their traveling companions succeeded in occupying five of the fifteen seats reserved for the workers. Even Ḥannā Ilyās, the chief Communist figure in the oil fields, turned up on the committee.[54] But he took a hostile attitude from the beginning, looking upon the committee as "an imperialist device" aimed at crippling the struggle of the workers for their basic rights. He argued in this manner at a meeting hastily summoned on the evening of that same day–13 June–and held in the local "Ḥama Ṭobāl" coffeehouse. The five hundred or so oil workers, who had assembled to hear him and whom inflation prices and shortage of necessities held at high tension, were persuaded before the meeting broke up to agree to a list of demands which included: the recognition of their right to form a union, the increase of the minimum basic day-wage from 80 to 250 fils,[55] the setting of an end to "arbitrary" dismissal of workers; and the introduction of a sickness, disability, and old-age insurance system. Apprised of the demands on 17 June, the company agreed on July 1 to a 50 to 100-fils increase of the high-cost-of-living allowance,[56] but not of the basic wage, and rejected the other points. On 2 July, a Higher Strikers' Committee of four, all worker-Communists,[57] a Committee-in-Reserve of five, and five subordinate strikers' committees of four to six members each, representing the workshop, engineering, city line, and motor transport workers, and the clerks and employees, came into being.[58] All the threads led to the party, which on 3 July gave the signal for the strike. About 5,000 oil workers, that is, the bulk of the hands at Kirkūk, obeyed the summons. On the fourth, the strikers marched through the town in proper order with

banners bearing their demands. In the following days, as the strike spread and increased in intensity, command after command came from Baghdād to the local authorities insisting on conclusive counter-measures and the use of force if necessary. On 7 July, however, the acting *mutaṣarrif* (governor) of Kirkūk reported that there had been "no disturbance of the public tranquillity," and that "in view of the strained situation" he had "not deemed it advisable to resort to force." He intimated that the demands of the workers were not unreasonable. "However, the managing director of the company required, out of regard for the company's prestige, that the strikers should first return to work and only then would prompt consideration be given to their claims."[59] The *mutaṣarrif* was quickly replaced.

It is not clear what instructions were impressed upon his successor by the higher powers, but events soon took an ugly turn. The strikers had been since 3 July marking their afternoons by meetings in the gardens of Gāwūrpāghī, outside the Kirkūk town limits. On 12 July they streamed to the place, as usual, to exchange impressions, listen to reports, and receive directives from the Higher Strikers' Committee. Before the close of the day, mounted policemen appeared on the scene; their commander, in a voice audible only to the workers nearest him,[60] ordered the crowd to disperse. Those who heard him were said to have answered him with "contemptuous laughter,"[61] whereupon, at a signal from him, his men charged from three sides into the crowd. At first they struck at heads and shoulders right and left with their cudgels, trampling several under the hooves of their horses, and then as the workers scattered in the direction of the "Jarf Maidān" square, they let go volleys at them. When the shooting stopped, at least ten workers lay dead and twenty-seven wounded.[62] The dead were all Hit from behind, it later came out in court. [63] As the news spread, a wave of indignation ran through the country. The party immediately laid the responsibility on "a high-up combination of government and company." The authorities, for their part, placed the blame on "malicious elements."

On 15 July, under the spur of events, the company announced the increase of the minimum basic day wage from 80 to 140 fils, and the total minimum day wage from 200 to 310 fils. On the sixteenth, the laborers returned to work. But they were never again the same. At Gāwūrpāghī they discovered something of the nature of the forces that opposed them. Their experience also provided them with matter for reflection: they were

suffering from want and only demanded their right; and the government, instead of helping them, sought to overawe them, and if it could not overawe them, it would “massacre” them. The process of their radicalization gained pace, and the theses of the party won wider credence among them.

For the time being, however, the party lost its guiding layer at Kirkūk. It had made the mistake of appointing the real leaders of its oil field organization on the higher and subsidiary strikers’ committees, and thus contravened one of the basic axioms of secret struggle. After the strike they were naturally the first to be rounded up. Although subsequently released by virtue of a decision from the Kirkūk Penal Court, they never regained their jobs. In the Schalchiyyah strike, too, the party had exposed its foremost fighters with results no less damaging, but this time it drew the necessary inferences and revised its organizational tactics. This came out clearly in the dramatic events that unfolded before long at the K3 pumping station south of Ḥadīthah.

In the second week of April of 1948, in a period permeated by the spirit of the *Wathbah*, and at a time when “revolutionary struggle” was an obligatory formula for every party organization, the K3 party committee sounded out the primary Committee of Workers’ Organizers and the primary Committee of Clerks’ Organizers as to the possibilities for staging a strike at the desert station. On 13 April, in the light of optimistic reports, it resolved to act. As it could not, however, impose the strike on K3’s 3,000 workers and clerks, but had to bring them over to the position of the party, it first raised a preparatory agitation. On the evening of the twenty-second, accounting the time ripe, it called together a mass meeting in the valley near al-Ghīrī outside K3, and won assent for its plan by acclamation. On the twenty-third, the strike began. Simultaneously, a whole series of *ad hoc* organizations took flesh: a strike committee, which hid completely from view and was the living brain of the strike; a negotiating body, in effect a facade for the strike committee and at the same time its chief lever; a string of meetings’ organizers, with authority to recruit orators and reciters of poetry, and to coordinate speeches and exhortations; a strike’s guard, consisting of prefects of meetings and strike’s prefects, and led by a chief of the guard. The prefects of meetings had charge of preserving order and discipline at strikers’ gatherings. The strike’s prefects were composed of

overseers, who exercised supervisory powers; of camp sentinels, who kept watch over the belongings of the workers; and finally of station patrollers, who enforced the strike. The station patrollers totalled fourteen at any one time, but were changed every four hours so that as many as eighty-four were needed daily. As the task was very trying and the party desired to "break in" the greatest possible number of workers, all the strikers had to serve as station patrollers in turn, according to a precise schedule maintained by the clerk of the guard. The station patrollers did their job so thoroughly that all K3 came to a standstill. A picket of the guard checked everyone leaving or entering the station, and the taking out of "even a pint of gasoline"–K3 supplied with gasoline all pumping stations except K1 and K2–needed a written permit from the chief of the guard. "In a word," wrote one of the closest leaders of the strike, "the dictatorship of the proletariat was established at K3 on the 23rd April, if the comparison is apt."[64]

The company, which until the evening of the twenty-second had no inkling of what was afoot, immediately took the position that the strike, unprefaced as it was by any warning, involved a breach of the law. It also cast doubt upon the representative character of the negotiating body. Confident of its powers, the party agreed to a referendum which, when conducted, came up to its expectations. Subsequently, as the strike showed no signs of subsiding, the company conceded a number of minor claims, but with regard to the basic demand of wage increases of from 25 to 40 percent it refused to give way. The strike committee on its side stuck to its guns. All this while, K3 seethed with excitement. Demonstration followed demonstration. At continuous meetings enthusiasm was kept up, hesitations broken down, and Communist ideas and values inculcated. K3 became a practical Communist training ground not only for the company's workers, but also for country people from neighboring Ḥadīthah, Ālūs, Jibbeh, Yarwānah, and Hiqlaniyyah.[65]

On 5 May, the fourteenth day of the strike, the situation abruptly changed. A strong mobile police force, supported by armored cars, occupied the station. Machine guns were set up in strategic places and near and around the workers' quarters, and the strike's guardsmen were brusquely ordered away. The party reacted cautiously. It gave strict injunctions: avoid the police at any cost; ignore "provocations." But the government had yet other things up its sleeve. On the seventh it deprived

the workers of food rations and cut their electric and water supply. The party could no longer mark time. Although Hiqlāniyyah made haste to share its bread with the strikers, it was too poor to go on doing it indefinitely. The same was true of the other villages. Under the circumstances, to drag things out would have led infallibly to the collapse of the strike. The party would have also just as surely ruined itself in the eyes of the workers. At K3 there was nothing left to be done. An encounter with the police was out of the question. The party took, therefore, the unusual step of ordering a march on Baghdād, which lay 249 kilometers away.

Thus with the sunrise of the twelfth of May, the mass of the workers at K3 set out on what in Communist annals has come to be known as *al-Masīrah* ("The March"), the cheers of the men of Hiqlāniyyah and the shrill, trilling cries of its women sounding after them, as they spiritedly walked away. At the head of the long column streamed a huge banner: "We the Oil Workers Have Come to Claim our Violated Rights."

As the day advanced and the desert sun rose in the sky, the heat became very painful, and by the time the workers reached the Hūrān valley about twenty-four kilometers to the southeast of K3, fatigue had grown upon them, and it was with much difficulty that they were able to cover the next six kilometers to the village of al-Baghdādī. By then many had broken down and lost consciousness. But relief came toward the afternoon. Eight lorries arrived for them from Hīt. Rumor had sped to that town with the news of their amazing march, and its aroused inhabitants decided that they should lend a hand. Their transport to Hīt, begun at once, ended only the following morning. Some, therefore, passed their first night in the mosques of Hīt or in its alleys, others lay writhing in the desert sand.

On 13 May the workers left Hīt on foot. The local authorities had made quite sure that no other means of movement was afforded them. To the many who had not slept the night before, every hour of the march was now a pain, but the overmastering sun did not spare the others, either. At the height of noon the workers, their heads aching, their limbs weary, halted and partook of the hospitality of al-Muḥammadī Arabs, who fired rifles and chanted *hausas* (tribal chants) in their honor.

The next leg of the journey was the most trying. The workers had resolved on a night march, and toward seven o'clock, in pitch dark, found themselves in a zone infested with wild beasts. They formed rows of five,

held hands, tied the front to the rear, and hesitantly moved forward. By midnight they could advance no more and lay down on the bare ground groaning for the first morning light. They were now near a place called al-Warrār, one kilometer to the north of ar-Ramādī and 126 kilometers to the west of Baghdād.

Before daybreak, they were afoot again and started traversing the waters of the overflown Euphrates in flat-bottomed *shakhtūrs* (boats). When all were across, they drew up in order and entered ar-Ramādī in an organized procession, with their banner rising above them and their rallying cries ringing through the town.

Crowded on trucks and in cars procured with donations made by the people of ar-Ramādī, they rode off in the afternoon, wondering at the strange inaction of the government. Hours later, as light was fading and as they approached the bridge leading into Fallūjah, they fell into a carefully laid police trap. Some of them were arrested and led away to jail, and the others sent home or back to K3.[66]

The *Masīrah* ended, therefore, in a defeat. Wages were not increased, nor were the conditions of labor palpably ameliorated. A segment of the workers directly concerned stepped back from the party. More than that, as a result of the wholesale dismissals that followed, the party lost all its cells at K3. But the *Masīrah* left an indelible mark upon the imagination of many workers, and helps, with the strikes at Schalchiyyah and at the port, and the tragedy of Gāwūrpāghī, to explain the incomparable prestige that the party would enjoy in their midst in the next decade.

27

THE ORGANIZATION, MEMBERSHIP, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF THE PARTY (1941-1949)

Elsewhere enough has been said of the history, internal relations, and working processes of the party command at the highest level. For the purposes of this chapter, it will be only necessary to bring back to mind the fact that the locus of party power and initiative shifted over the years. To put this in more precise terms: in 1941-1942, when the party was still in its malleable stage, a multiopinioned Central Committee, acting to no small degree on a collegiate basis, stood at the pinnacle; but from 1943 onward, with the weeding out of factions, and as party relationships gained in method and solidity, real power came to reside in what we chose to call "the stable party center," which consisted of Fahd, the secretary general, and Zakī Basīm, his closest associate and a member of the Politbureau–a change that was latent from the beginning in the nature of the Iraqi Communist party as a clandestine party. After the arrest of Fahd and Basīm in January 1947, primary responsibility fell on a first *mas'ūl* (comrade-in-charge) who, however, guided the party–from August 1947 to October 1948–in the light of directions sent by Fahd at intervals from inside the prison of Kūt. Subsequently, the helm passed into unauthorized hands: this occurred in the chaotic period October 1948 to June 1949.

To complete the picture, a word or two must now be added in regard to the intermediate and grass-roots organizations of the party. When the command was able to spread a net of cells over many of the provinces and to formalize party interrelationships–an effort begun in earnest in 1943, and much in advance by the time of the March 1945 First Party Congress–a graded structure of organizations came to life (see Table 27-1).

Immediately below the "stable party center" stood the secretaries of the Armenian branch, the Kurdish branch, and the Southern Party Zone. The

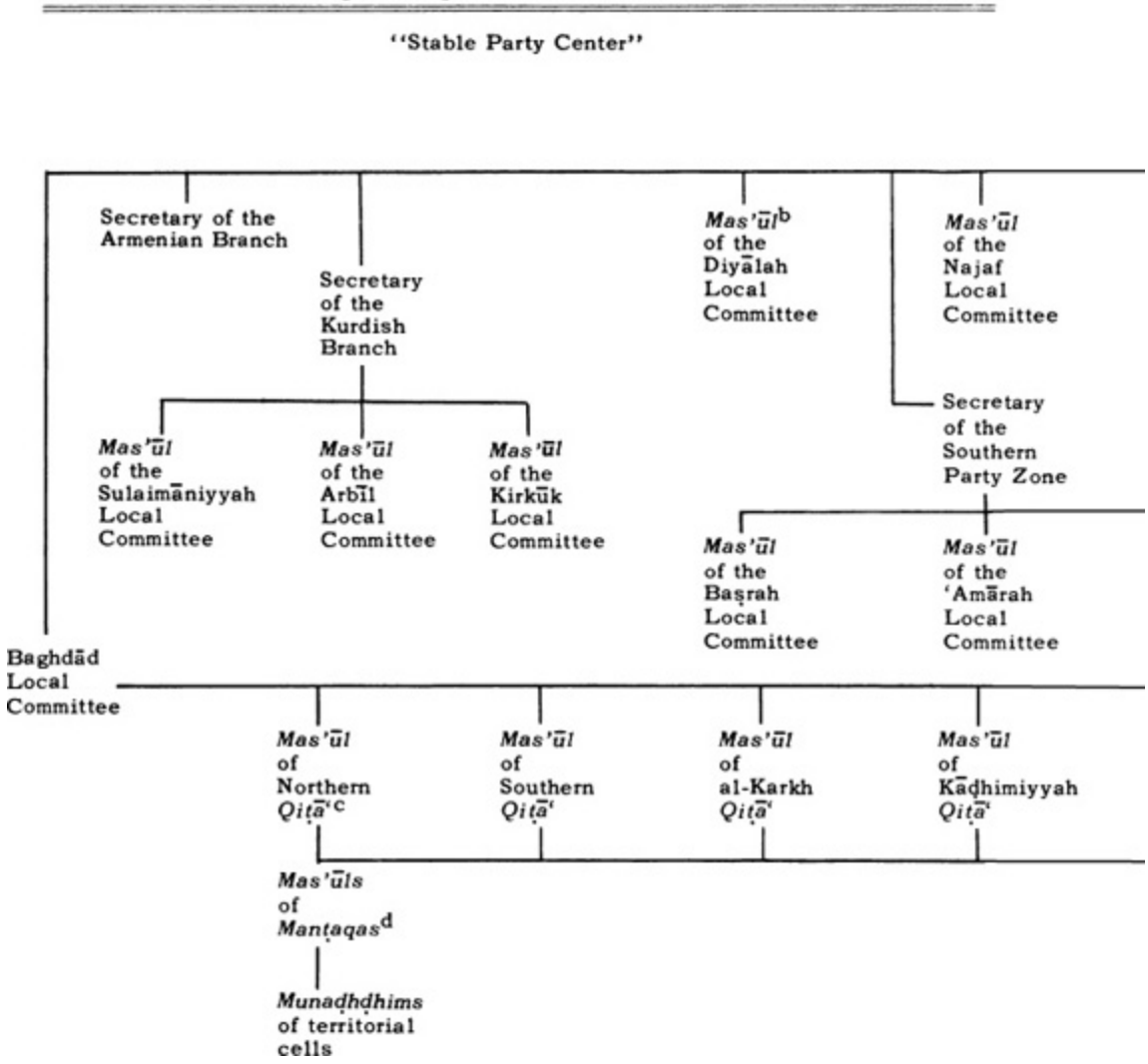
Armenian branch was a small affair, and embraced no more than twenty-five members.[1] The Kurdish branch grew rapidly after 1945, when Kurdish Communists who had cooperated with the fractional *Waḥdat-un-Niḍāl* or had linked themselves with the *Shursh* group or the Ruzkari Kurd[2] joined the Iraqi Communist party.[3] Under its secretary came the *mas'ūls* of the local committees of the preponderantly Kurdish provinces of Sulaimāniyyah, Arbīl, and Kirkūk. The secretary of the Southern Zone, for his part, supervised the *mas'ūls* of the local committees of Baṣrah, 'Amārah, and Nāṣiriyyah–the provinces which provided Fahd with his most enduring support. The *mas'ūls* at Najaf and of Ḥillah and Diyālah and the other middle provinces of Iraq answered directly to the party center at Baghdād. In Dulaim no organization existed.[4] Mosul had a *mas'ūl* only in 1948-1949, that is, after the merger of the Mosul-entrenched League of Iraqi Communists with Fahd's followers. For more details on the provincial *mas'ūls* and for the dominant ethnic and religious character of each province in the forties, refer to Table 27-2.

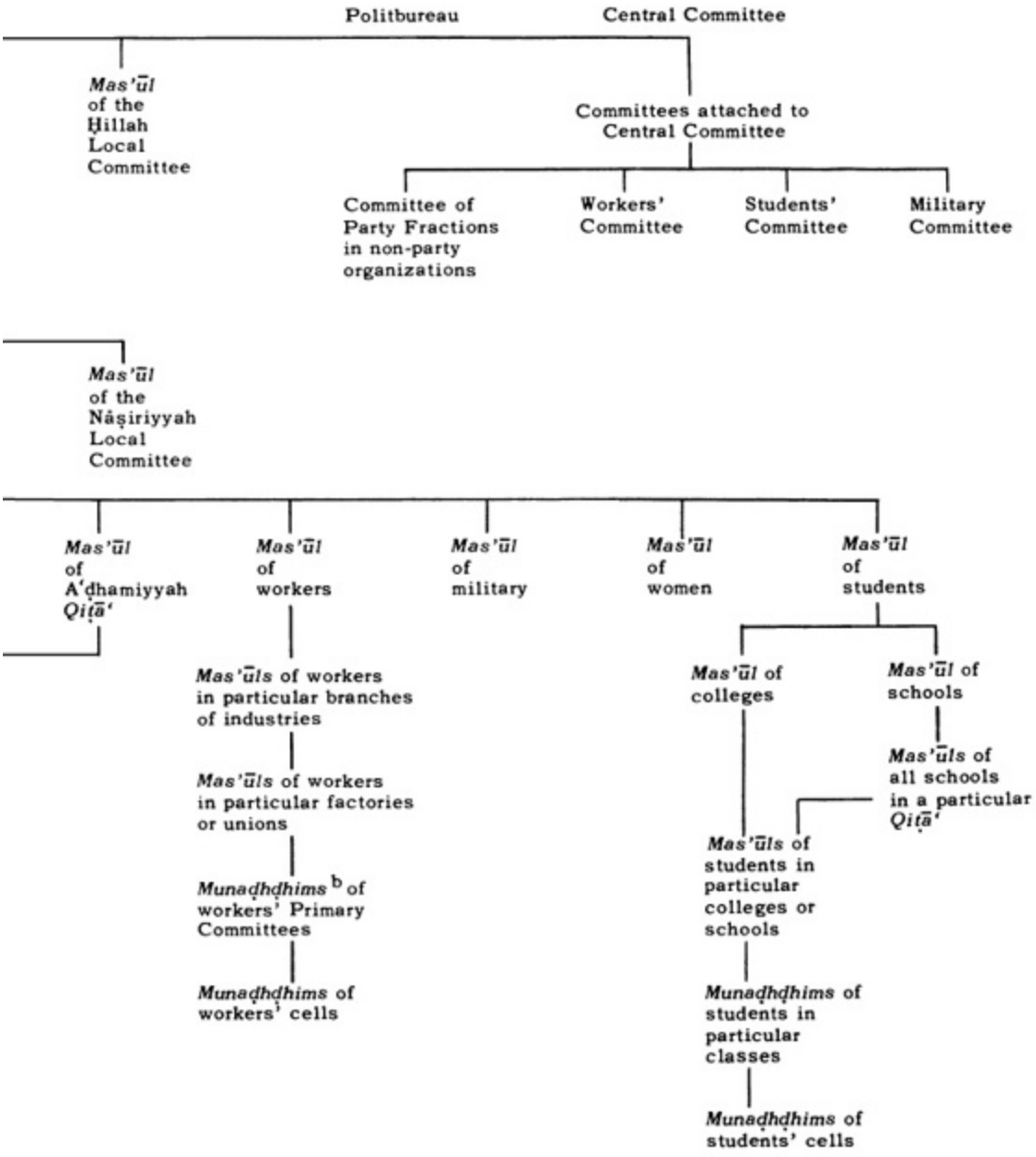
The Baghdād organization possessed a local committee but no *mas'ūl* of its own, its reins being firmly held by the secretary general himself. Its sphere of action did not extend beyond the capital and its suburbs: there was not even a glimmer of party life in the rest of Baghdād province. Its structure, as is evident from Table 27-1, was built partly on territorial and partly on occupational principles. In other words, it consisted of a network of territorial cells as well as workplace and studyplace cells. Thus, on the one hand, Greater Baghdād was broken down for party purposes into five *qiṭā's* or sectors–the *qiṭā's* of al-Kāḍhimiyyah, al-Aḍhamiyyah, and al-Karkh, and the northern and southern *qiṭā's*–each with its own *mas'ūl*,[5] who communicated directly with the secretary general. On the other hand, the party units in educational institutions reported not to the *mas'ūls* of *qiṭā's* in which the institutions were located, but to the *mas'ūl* of students,[6] who also had direct contact with the party center. Similarly, party units in workers' establishments or military camps came under the *mas'ūl* of workers and the *mas'ūl* of soldiers, respectively. All these *mas'ūls* formed the Baghdād Local Committee. Beneath the *mas'ūl* of a *qiṭā'* was the *mas'ūl* of a *manṭaqah–a* subdistrict party unit–and then the *munaḍhḍhim*–organizer–of a territorial cell. Beneath the *mas'ūl* of workers was the *mas'ūl* of workers in a particular branch of industry, the *mas'ūl* of workers in a

particular factory, the *munaḍhḍhim* of a primary workers' committee, and the *munaḍhḍhim* of a workers' cell, in that order. And likewise in regard to student-Communists, as indicated in Table 27-1. To the *mas'ūl* on every level was attached a committee that consisted of the *mas'ūls* (or *munaḍhḍhims)* of the next lower level.

TABLE 27-1

Diagram of the Iraqi Communist Party Organization in 1946 (with the Baghdād Organization Shown in Some Detail)[a]


"Stable Party Center"
Secretary of the Armenian Branch
Secretary of the Kurdish Branch
Mas'ūl[b] of the Diyālah Local Committee
Mas'ūl of the Najaf Local Committee
Secretary of the Southern Party Zone
Mas'ūl of the Sulaimāniyyah Local Committee
Mas'ūl of the Arbīl Local Committee
Mas'ūl of the Kirkūk Local Committee
Mas'ūl of the Baṣrah Local Committee
Mas'ūl of the 'Amārah Local Committee
Baghdād Local Committee
Mas'ūl of Northern Qiṭā'[c]
Mas'ūl of Southern Qiṭā'
Mas'ūl of al-Karkh Qiṭā'
Mas'ūl of Kāḍhimiyyah Qiṭā'
Mas'ūls of Manṭaqas[d]
Munaḍhḍhims of territorial cells


Politbureau
Central Committee
Mas'ūl of the Ḥillah Local Committee
Committees attached to Central Committee
Committee of Party Fractions in non-party organizations
Workers' Committee
Students' Committee
Military Committee
Mas'ūl of the Nāṣiriyyah Local Committee
Mas'ūl of A'ḍhamiyyah Qiṭā'
Mas'ūl of workers
Mas'ūl of military
Mas'ūl of women
Mas'ūl of students
Mas'ūls of workers in particular branches of industries
Mas'ūls of workers in particular factories or unions
Munaḍhḍhims of workers' Primary Committees
Munaḍhḍhims of workers' cells
Mas'ūl of colleges
Mas'ūl of schools
Mas'ūls of all schools in a particular Qiṭā'
Mas'ūls of students in particular colleges or schools
Munaḍhḍhims of students in particular classes
Munaḍhḍhims of students' cells

[a]In 1946 no party organizations existed in provinces of Dulaim and Mosul. Organizations in Kūt and Dīwāniyyah provinces were in process of formation.

[b]*"Mas'ūl* or *ar-Rafīq al-Mas'ūl:* comrade-in-charge. This term was often used interchangeably with the term *munaḍhḍhim:* organizer.

[c]*Qiṭā':* party unit based on district.

[d]*Manṭaqah:* party unit based on subdistrict.

TABLE 27-2

Mas‘ūls of Local Party Committees (1943 to June 1949)[a]

Centers with a mas'ūl[b]	*Province*	*Predominant ethnic and sectarian character of province in forties*	*Years in which centers had a mas'ūl*	*No. of successive mas'ūls*
Local committees under the secretary of the southern party zone				
Baṣrah	Baṣrah	Arab Shī'ī; Baṣrah town: near Sunnī-Shī'ī parity and active Jewish and Christian congregations; Zubair town: out-and-out Sunnī	Throughout period	5
Nāṣiriyyah	Muntafiq	Arab Shī'ī	Throughout period	7
'Amārah	'Amārah	Arab Shī'ī; tiny but active Sabean congregation	Throughout period	5
Local committees under the secretary of the Kurdish Party Branch				
Kirkūk[c]	Kirkūk	Kurdish with a substantial number of Turkomans (including Christian Turkomans) in urban areas	1945-1949[d]	5
Sulaimāniyyah[c]	Sulaimāniyyah	Kurdish	1945-1949[d]	4
Arbīl[c]	Arbīl	Kurdish	1945-1949[d]	5
Local committees communicating directly with the party center in Baghdād				
Najaf	Karbalā'	Arab Shī'ī; active Persian congregation	1944-1949	4
Karbalā'[e]	Karbalā'		April-June 1949	1
Ḥillah	Ḥillah	Arab Shī'ī	1946-1949	4
Musayyib[e]	Ḥillah		1948-February 1949	3
Ba'qūbah	Diyālah	Mixed Arab-Kurdish, with Shī'ī-Sunnī parity	1946-October 1948 (intermittently), April-June 1949	3
Dīwāniyyah	Dīwāniyyah	Arab Shī'ī	1947-1948	2
Kūt	Kūt	Arab Shī'ī	1947-1948	2
Mosul	Mosul	Predominantly Sunnī Arab in urban areas, Kurdish in rural areas, with a large community of Christians and a substantial number of Yazīdis	1948-February 1949[f]	2
Provinces with no party organization				
	Dulaim	Arab Sunnī	–	–
Province of Baghdād[g] outside Greater Baghdād		Arab Sunnī	–	–
Total				52[h]

[a]There was no stable organizational structure prior to 1943.

[b]*Mas'ul* or *ar-Rafīq al-Mas'ul:* comrade-in-charge.

[c]These centers communicated at times (as in 1947 and 1949) directly with the central party command, and at times (as in 1945-1946 and in 1948) through the secretary of the Kurdish Branch of the party.

[d]Prior to 1945, most of the Kurdish Communists belonged to the fractional Waḥdat-un-Niḍāl, to Ruzkarī Kurd and to the Shursh group.

[e]It is not clear why the "unauthorized" Central Committees (November 1948-June 1949) decided to establish separate party centers in these localities. The presence of military factories in Musayyib could be a factor.

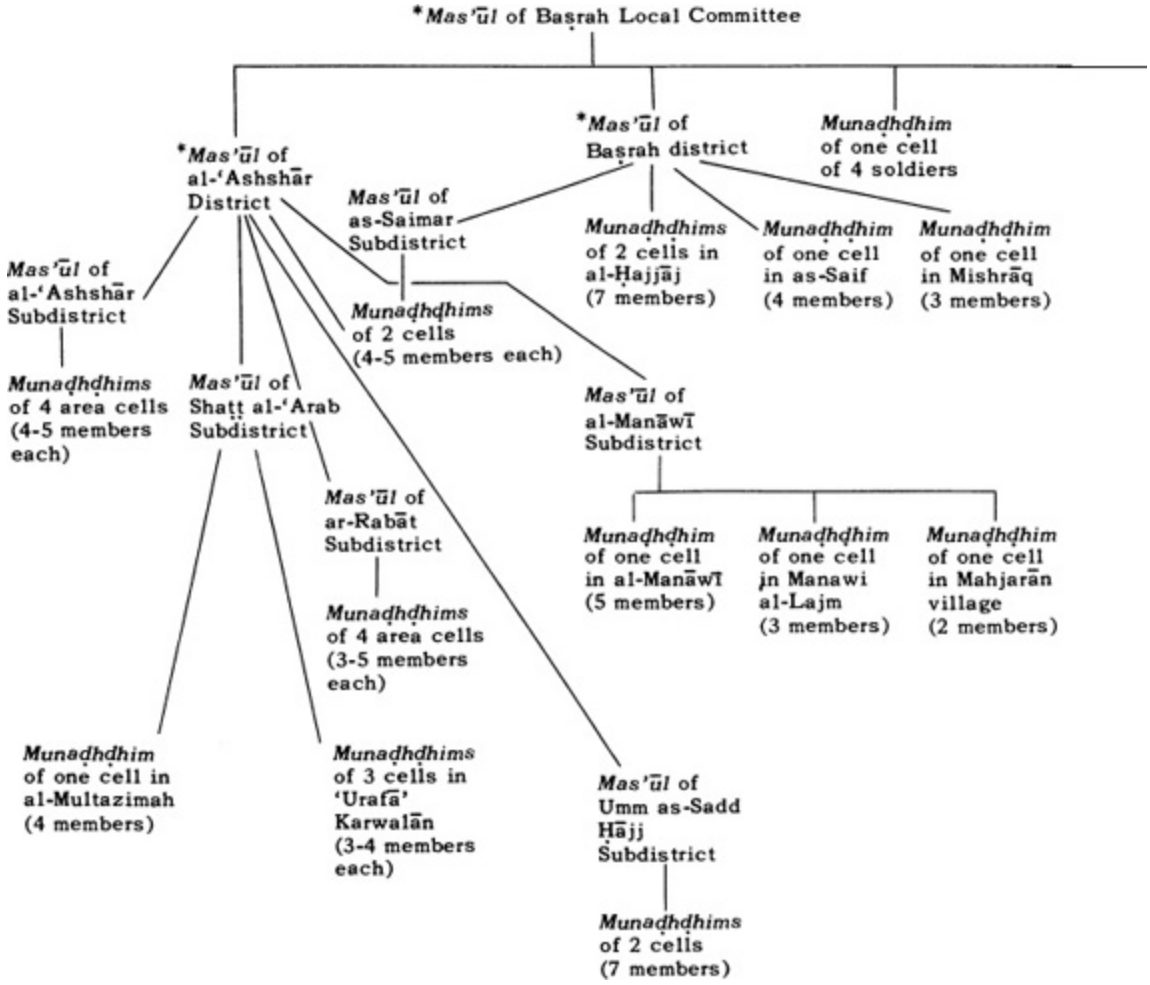
[f]Up to the arrest of Fahd in January 1947, the party had no organization in Mosul. The Mosul Communists who joined the party subsequently had belonged to the fractional League of Iraqi Communists.

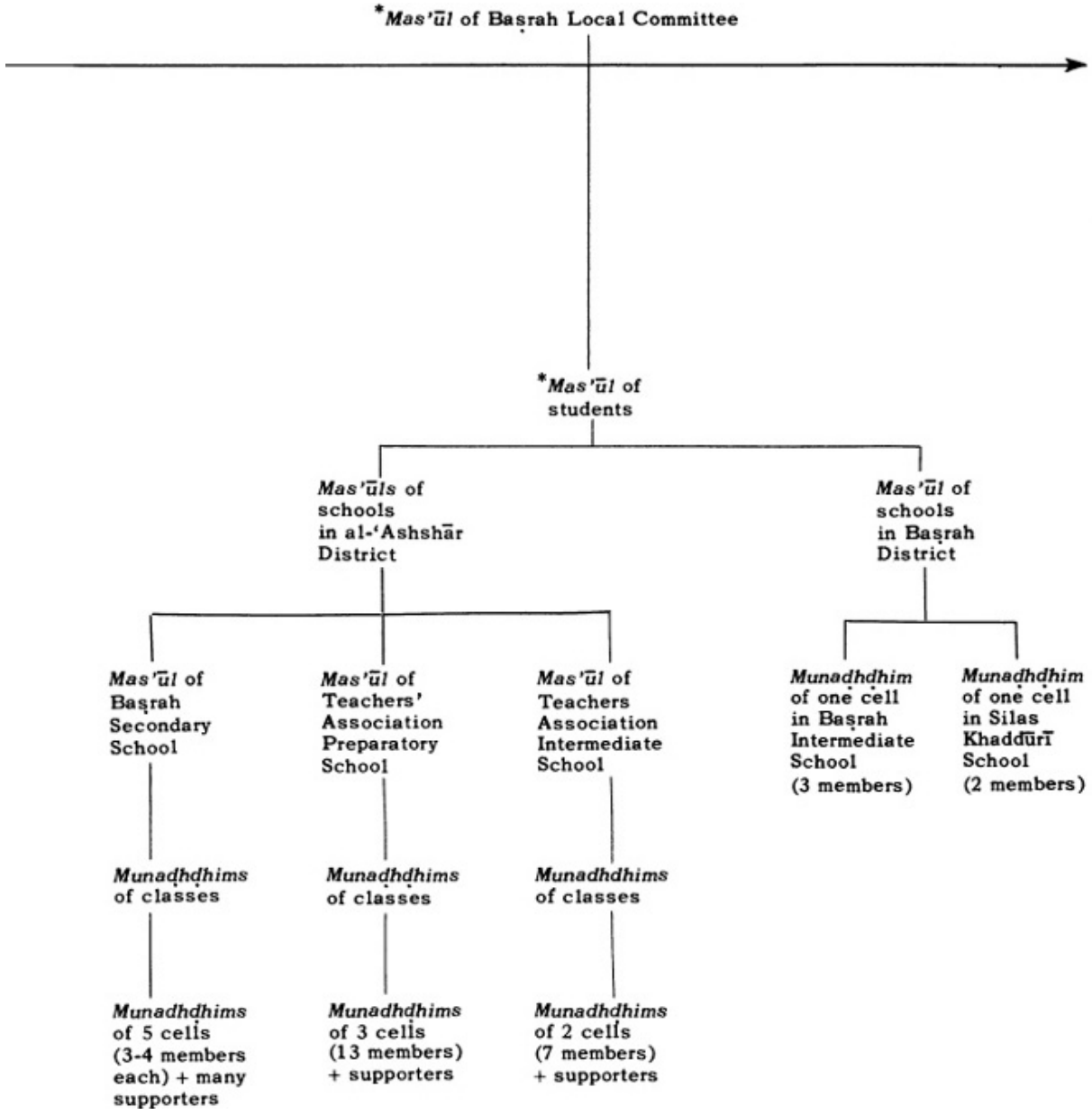
[g]In Greater Baghdād–a predominantly Arab area with a slight Sunnī majority and a substantial and active Jewish community in the forties–the members of the Local Party Committee came directly under the party center and had no *mas‘ūl* of their own.

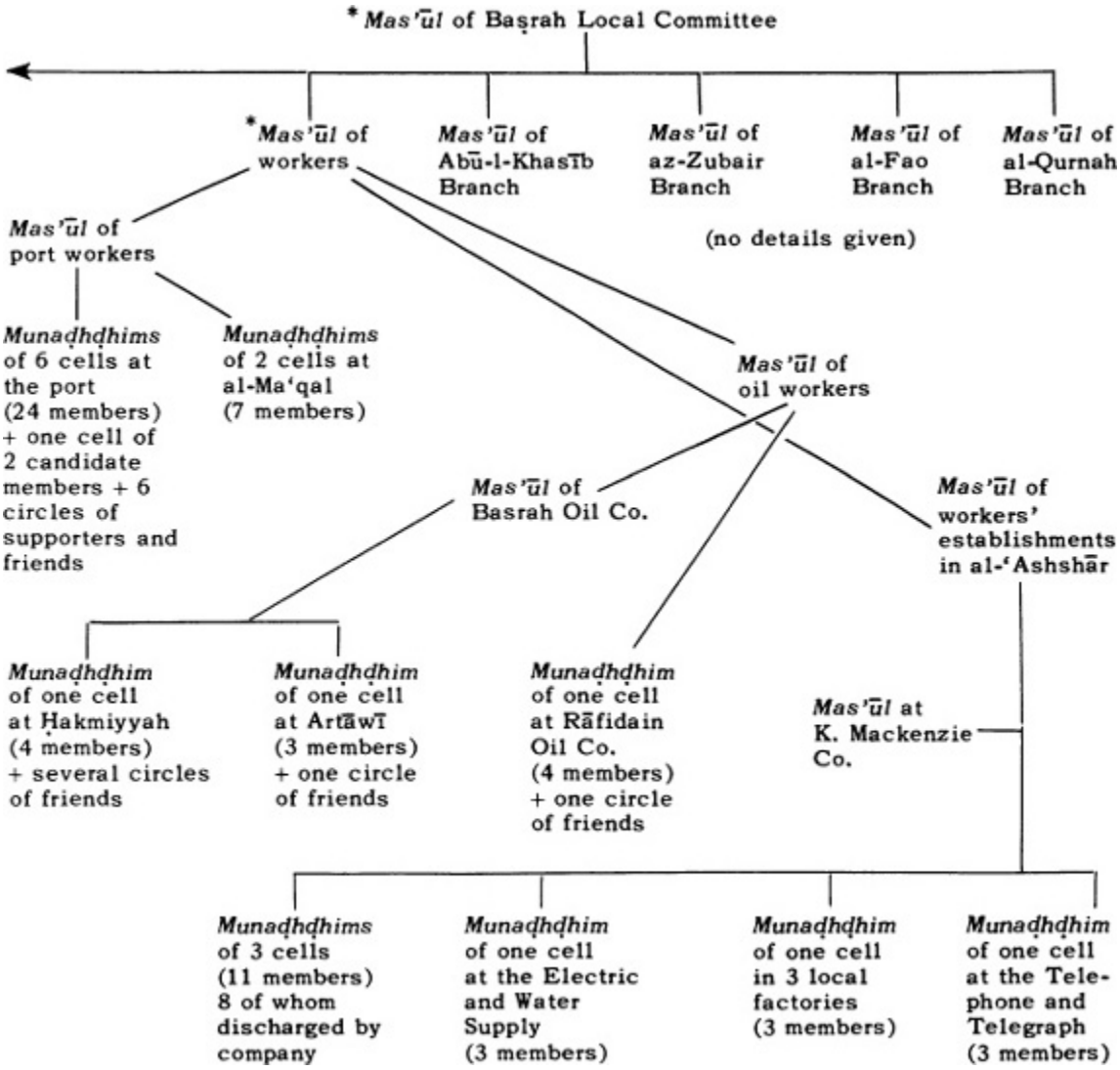
[h]The discrepancy with the total shown in Table A-6 is due to the fact that three Communists held each two successive appointments at different centers.

TABLE 27-3

Baṣrah Party Organization in 1948


*Mas'ūl of Baṣrah Local Committee
*Mas'ūl of al-'Ashshār District
*Mas'ūl of Baṣrah district
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell of 4 soldiers
Mas'ūl of as-Saimar Subdistrict
Munaḍḥḍhims of 2 cells in al-Ḥajjāj (7 members)
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell in as-Saif (4 members)
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell in Mishrāq (3 members)
Mas'ūl of al-'Ashshār Subdistrict
Munaḍḥḍhims of 2 cells (4-5 members each)
Munaḍḥḍhims of 4 area cells (4-5 members each)
Mas'ūl of Shaṭṭ al-'Arab Subdistrict
Mas'ūl of al-Manāwī Subdistrict
Mas'ūl of ar-Rabāt Subdistrict
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell in al-Manāwī (5 members)
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell in Manawi al-Lajm (3 members)
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell in Mahjarān village (2 members)
Munaḍḥḍhims of 4 area cells (3-5 members each)
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell in al-Multazimah (4 members)
Munaḍḥḍhims of 3 cells in 'Urafā' Karwalān (3-4 members each)
Mas'ūl of Umm as-Sadd Hājj Subdistrict
Munaḍḥḍhims of 2 cells (7 members)


*Mas'ūl of Baṣrah Local Committee
*Mas'ūl of students
Mas'ūls of schools in al-'Ashshār District
Mas'ūl of schools in Baṣrah District
Mas'ūl of Baṣrah Secondary School
Mas'ūl of Teachers' Association Preparatory School
Mas'ūl of Teachers Association Intermediate School
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell in Baṣrah Intermediate School (3 members)
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell in Silas Khaddūrī School (2 members)
Munaḍḥḍhims of classes
Munaḍḥḍhims of classes
Munadhdhims of classes
Munaḍḥḍhims of 5 cells (3-4 members each) + many supporters
Munadhdhims of 3 cells (13 members) + supporters
Munadhdhims of 2 cells (7 members) + supporters


* Mas'ūl of Baṣrah Local Committee
* Mas'ūl of workers
Mas'ūl of Abū-l-Khasīb Branch
Mas'ūl of az-Zubair Branch
Mas'ūl of al-Fao Branch
Mas'ūl of al-Qurnah Branch
(no details given)
Mas'ūl of port workers
Munaḍḥḍhims of 6 cells at the port (24 members) + one cell of 2 candidate members + 6 circles of supporters and friends
Munaḍḥḍhims of 2 cells at al-Ma'qal (7 members)
Mas'ūl of oil workers
Mas'ūl of Basrah Oil Co.
Mas'ūl of workers' establishments in al-'Ashshār
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell at Ḥakmiyyah (4 members) + several circles of friends
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell at Artāwī (3 members) + one circle of friends
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell at Rāfidain Oil Co. (4 members) + one circle of friends
Mas'ūl at K. Mackenzie Co.
Munaḍḥḍhims of 3 cells (11 members) 8 of whom discharged by company
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell at the Electric and Water Supply (3 members)
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell in 3 local factories (3 members)
Munaḍḥḍhim of one cell at the Telephone and Telegraph (3 members)

*Members of the Baṣrah Local Committee.

Mas'ul or *ar-Rafīq al-Mas'ūl:* comrade-in-charge. *Munaḍḥḍhim:* organizer.

Source: Letter which was undated but written in 1948 by the *mas'ūl* of the Local Basrah Committee to the first *mas'ūl* in Baghdād.

Provincial party organizations rested on the same principles (consult Table 27-3, which shows in detail not only the structure of the Baṣrah party organization, but the actual size and distribution of its membership). However, where the local organization was still in an infant stage or had been unable to make any headway, the provincial *mas'ūl* combined in his person several or all of the functions which in Baghdād or Baṣrah were divided among the various *mas'ūls* of *qiṭā' s* and the *mas'ūls* of students and workers. A concentration of responsibilities was also characteristic of organizations under heavy police harassment. The subsidiary organizations

in towns or localities other than the headquarters town of the province were modeled on the organization of the headquarters town, and had their own *mas‘ūl* who was responsible to the provincial *mas‘ūl*. Where the party had penetrated into the countryside, the local committee included a *mas‘ūl* of peasants,[7] who was often himself a *mas‘ūl* of a village and under whom came the *mas‘ūls* of collections of dwellings in the village–the *salafs*, as they were called in the south of Iraq.

A number of points remain to be briefly noted in regard to this hierarchy of organizations. First, the party was atomized into cells of from three to five members: a device essentially directed against provocateurs. Second, no direct intercourse occurred between these cells: they were only connected through the *mas‘ūl* at the next level (see Table 27-3); the linkage, incidentally, between the party center and the provincial *mas‘ūls*, and between the latter and their subordinates in the country towns, was often effected through party *murāsils*, that is, couriers, who in many instances were reliable and well-trained children. Third, if the Baṣrah organization was true to type, the percentage of occupational cells in the party appear to have been higher than the percentage of territorial cells (see Table 27-4):[8] this follows from the party’s primary interest in students, teachers, and workers. Fourth, nomination of *mas‘ūls* (or *munaḍḥḍhims)* from above was practiced on all levels. Fifth, in the system as a whole, the institutional factor mattered less and the personal factor mattered more because of the instinctive resistance of Iraqis to form, and because Fahd tended to interfere and leave the impress of his personality at many points. This somewhat negated the advantages of atomization, and increased the party’s security problems. Finally, centralism characterized the entire structure, that is, the *mas‘ūls* of lower units were not as a rule answerable to the members of their own units, but only to the *mas‘ūls* of higher units. Many of these features were obviously inevitabilities of successful clandestine combat.

TABLE 27-4

Summary of Table 27-3

Type of cells		No. of cells	%	No. of members	%
Territorial		23	43.4	between 80 and 97	between 43.0 and 46.6
Occupational					
Soldiers' cells	1			4	between 1.9 and 2.2
Workers' cells					
Port workers	8[a]			31	
Oil workers	3[b]			11 } 62	between 29.8 and 33.3
Other workers	6			20	
Students' cells	12[c]			between 40 and 45	between 21.5 and 21.7
Total occupational		30	56.6		
General total		53	100.0	between 186 and 208	100.0

[a]Plus one cell of 2 candidate members and 6 circles of supporters and friends.
[b]Plus several circles of friends.
[c]Plus "many" supporters.

Centralism and appointment from above notwithstanding, a remarkable degree of freedom of opinion permeated all party units. A different situation would have been out of keeping with the nature of Iraqis. Sometimes, in fact, freedom verged on indiscipline. Here is a sample:

> I, as *mas'ūl* at Mandali,[9] object to your organization plan. I believe that this is something of your own devising and not a project of the party. . . . Its only effect would be to bring the entire membership under your personal influence. . . . If the party did approve such a plan then it must have been unaware of opinions other than the ones you hold. I must therefore, state my point of view to which my experience in the struggle of the past year gives an undoubted practical value.[10]

This was written by a subordinate *mas'ūl* to the *mas'ūl* of the Diyālah Local Committee. Here is another letter addressed to Fahd himself which shows that members could communicate their complaints to the party center over the head of their *mas'ūls:*

> The person whom you have charged with responsibility in our province[11] . . . behaves in an arbitrary manner and shows no interest in the comrades nor cares for our education. . . . Moreover, he has not helped our brethren here nor collected sums from us for their support. Thus 'Abd-uj-Jabbār az-Zuhairī[12] remained without food for two whole days. . . . We ask that you appoint another *mas'ūl* in his stead.[13]

This letter is, by the way, significant on another account: it sheds light on an aspect of the Iraqi Communist party hitherto overlooked: the party as an organization for mutual support, as a means of relief for the individual against economic vulnerability, in other words, as a sort of continuation of the *aṣnāf*–the old workers' guilds.

So much for organization. It is time now to cast a glance on the following of the party. The first thing about it to catch our notice is its multiple nature. Five categories can be discerned: the members proper, the candidate members, the organized supporters, the unorganized supporters, and the friends–a differentiation dating only from 1943. The member proper took part personally in one of the party units, paid periodic subscriptions, pledged himself to further the cause of the party, and could only be expelled by the secretary general or the Central Committee. The candidate member was in all respects a member except formally: he had to pass through a probationary period of at least two months if a worker, and at least six months if he belonged to another class.[14] The organized supporters were incorporated in cells and led by regular party members; they had only the right to offer suggestions to the party, and under normal conditions constituted a sort of reservoir from which the ranks of candidate members were replenished when the need arose, or if this suited party policy. The unorganized supporters were linked only to individual members, or candidate members, or organized supporters; they did not receive the internal party circulars and were brought into action only on occasions. The appellation of "friend" was attached to sympathizers who made donations or, by lending their names, helped the party to put out a paper or hold public meetings.

According to Mālik Saif, the first *mas'ūl* of the party in 1947-1948, in the country as a whole the number of supporters exceeded that of regular members.[15] On the other hand, the proportion of candidate members appears to have been extremely low. The Greater Baṣrah party organization, for example, embraced in 1948 fifty-three cells of at least 186 members, and only one cell of 2 candidate members (see Tables 27-3 and 27-4). The explanation lay in the policy that Fahd adopted in 1946, which aimed at keeping the majority of membership applicants in the status of supporters

for a protracted period, so that–as Fahd subsequently explained–"those of them who are not real Communists will sooner or later find their way to the licensed national democratic parties and thus add to these parties' capabilities for action."[16] This was also in line with Fahd's long-standing emphasis on quality than on sheer numbers.

Perhaps the most significant feature of party membership was its high degree of instability. The relatively brief standing in the Communist movement of many of the members of the Central Committee bears out this point (see Table 27-5). As much as 67.9 percent of all members of Fahd's Central Committees (November 1941-October 1948) had–on attaining that status–belonged to the party for less than five years. Moreover, none of the members of the "unauthorized" Central Committees (October 1948-June 1949) were of more than five years' standing. Table 27-6 brings out even more clearly the acute fluctuations in party membership. The figures given are, of course, estimates, but in the opinion of this writer, do not go substantially–if at all–beyond the truth. They point to two types of changes in the size of the party. On the one hand, a recurring up-and-down movement can be discerned. The reasons for it are not far to seek. In the thirties, when the party was still a delicate and sensitive growth, the ups and downs of membership correlated closely with the slackening and intensification of police vigilance. This factor continued to be crucial in the forties: harassment by the authorities was instrumental in the defection of a series of first *mas'ūls* in 1948-1949, with disastrous consequences for the party. But the sharp drop in membership in 1943 was a direct result of inner party conflicts, while the sharp rise in 1947-1948 could be attributed in part to the closing of Communist ranks, but more essentially to the postwar economic crisis. In addition to the up-and-down movement, there was also a progression in party membership, in other words, after each decline the party reemerged in greater strength (take another glance at Table 27-6). The explanation for this phenomenon has already been supplied in the chapter dealing with the general causes for the increase of communism in Iraq.[17]

TABLE 27-5

Members of the Central Committees (1941-1949):
Length of Association with the Communist Movement

prior to Reaching Central Committee Status

	Fahd's Central Committees November 1941-October 1948[a]		*Provisional and "unauthorized" Central Committees October 1948-June 1949*[b]	
No. of years	*No. of members*	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*
–[c]	6	67.9	–	83.4
1	1		2	
2	5		3	
3	3		2	
4	4		1	
5	–		2	
6	1	25.0	–	
7	2		–	
10	1		–	
13	1		–	
14	1		–	
18	1		–	
No particulars	2[d]		2[d]	
Total	28		12	

[a]See Tables 19-1, 19-2, 19-3, and 22-1.

[b]See Table 23-1.

[c]Appointed to Central Committee in year of enrollment in party.

[d]No definite particulars, but of less than six years' standing.

But let us for a while abandon the realm of numbers and descend to a more concrete level by quoting on this same subject of party instability from an unusually vivid report prepared in 1948 by the *mas'ūl* of Diyālah:

TABLE 27-6

Estimates of Iraqi Communist Party Membership 1933-1949 as Illustrative of Membership Instability

Year	*Members*	*Source*
1933	60[a]	*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī* (an internal journal of the Communist party prison organization), No. 14 of 14 February 1954, p. 7.
Middle 1935	"a few hundreds"	Qāsim Ḥasan, founding member of party and member of Central Committee (May-December 1935), to this writer in 1957.
Early 1936	–	*Ibid.*
November 1937[b]	"no less than 400"[c]	Communist manuscript, "The Iraqi Army," pp. 55-56.
1940	80	'Abdallah Mas'ūd, secretary of the Central Committee (1940-1941) to this writer in 1957.
November 1942[d]	"more than 1,000"	*Ibid.* Mas'ūd was a member of the Politbureau in 1942.
1943[e]	"a tiny handful"	*Ibid.*; and *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 15 of 20 February 1954, p. 8.
January 1948[f]	"from 3,000 to 4,000 members and a much greater number of supporters"	Mālik Saif, the first *mas'ūl* of the party in 1947-1948, to this writer in 1957.
End of 1949[g]	"a few hundreds"	*Ibid.*

[a]This was the size of the Communist circles active in that year rather than of the party, which was founded only in 1935.

[b]I.e., prior to the discovery of the army cells by the police.

[c]Overwhelmingly soldiers and noncommissioned officers.

[d]I.e., prior to the party schism of that year.

[e]After the schism.

[f]I.e., at the time of the *Wathbah*.

[g]After the break-up of the organizations of the party.

> In the days of the local committee appointed by Fahd[18]. . . membership was on the increase. Workers, soldiers, students, peasants joined our ranks. Then terror came and the committee was arrested. . . . Some members lost heart and fell out. . . . An opportunist wrecked the work of the party in the village of Buhruz. . . . Nothing was left in the province apart from isolated individuals with no organizational bonds. . . . Although I was then a simple member and responsible for the training of no more than five students, I found myself at the head of the organization and under circumstances of extreme difficulty. . . . Then the people made its mighty *Wathbah*[19] and the masses of workers and students who had been maltreating us now rushed to our support and began to show us respect after having looked down on us and to take pride in our company

> after having shunned it. . . . And party work returned to its old rhythm, but I had no true familiarity with the principles of organization nor knew how to lead a party unit which embraced now more than a hundred members. . . . Before I could learn the ropes . . . martial law was declared, [20] terror returned . . . and the organization again fell apart.[21]

We now turn from the more general to the more particular characteristics of party membership, that is, to the composition of membership by occupation, age, sex, education, religion, sect, ethnic origin, place of birth, and place of activity. Tables A-3 to A-33 supply the relevant data and are self-explanatory, so that we need not here encumber the text with more than an introductory word and a number of general observations.

We should begin by noting that the analysis includes only *members of the Iraqi Communist party*, in other words, it excludes "supporters" of the party as well as members of the party's auxiliaries such as the National Liberation party or the League Against Zionism, except for the members of these auxiliaries who were simultaneously members of the Iraqi Communist party. Moreover, the analysis does not embrace *all* party members,[22] but only the members who came to light in 1947-1949 and earlier, including members whose names appeared in Communist party records and members who were cited in statements by arrested party leaders. On the other hand, it must be remembered that in those years almost all the organizations of the party were broken up, and all important Communists and most of the active Communists became known. The analysis thus comprises all the members of the Central Committees of the period November 1941-June 1949,[23] almost all Communists of the middle echelons for the period 1943[24]-June 1949, and the majority of the lower echelons and "active" rank and file–as defined in Table A-3–that is, a total of 1,058 party members. In regard to these Communists, our data are nearly complete in all the respects indicated. In addition, data have been gathered on the occupation of 774 other Communists, 512 of whom belonged to the rank and file of the civilian organization of the party and were not considered by the authorities sufficiently "active" or "dangerous" to merit a police investigation. The remaining 262 were members of the military organization of the party and were, it appears, more fully examined by the services of army intelligence.

Before proceeding with the analysis, one other clarification must be added: party membership in the years under study was obviously not in a state of rest but continually moving, not in the sense that it expanded and contracted–we are not concerned with this type of movement here–but in the sense of inner upward mobility: the *mas'ūls* of local party committees, for example, changed in many provinces no less than five times between 1943 and June 1949.[25] The same is true of the members of the Central Committee. This problem has been kept in view throughout the analysis. Accordingly, Communists who belonged, say, to the "middle echelons" of the party at one point during that period, but had reached Central Committee status before the end of the period, were analyzed with the members of the Central Committee and not under "middle echelons." To put this in general terms: every member of the party has been taken into account only once in this analysis.

We can now devote our attention to Tables A-4 to A-8, relating to occupational distribution. Out of the total of 1,832 known Communists, 27.6% were students, 3.4% cadets, 25.7% workers and semiproletarians, 11.8% soldiers and noncommissioned officers, 9.7% members of the professions (7.2% teachers, 1.2% lawyers), 9.1% white-collar workers, 3.1% craftsmen, 2.9% small shopkeepers, and only 2.6% peasants (see Table A-4). Obviously, the Communist party was a party of several classes and rested basically on an alliance of elements of the workers, soldiers, and the middle and lower middle-class intelligentsia.

On the other hand, it is clear from Tables A-5 and A-6 that the all-crucial role in this alliance was played by the members of the professions, and especially the teachers, and by the students and white-collar people. Thus, while the workers and semiproietarians formed only 17.8% of the members of Fahd's Central Committees, 8.3% of the members of the "unauthorized" Central Committees, 6.1% of the provincial *mas'ūls*, 11.1% of the members of the local party committees, and 6.9% of the middle echelons of Greater Baghdād, the proportions of the teachers in the positions named were, respectively, as high as 35.7%, 25.0%, 28.6%, 19.2%, and 12.6%; those of the students: 14.3%, 41.7%, 24.5%, 28.6%, and 23.0%; and of the white-collar workers: 10.7%, 8.3%, 14.3%, 21.4%, and 24.1%.

How far communism had progressed in the colleges and schools can be roughly gathered from Tables A-9 to A-12. Penetration was, it is clear,

deeper among the teachers and students–the state secondary schoolteachers and the college students in particular–than among the lawyers, the industrial workers, or other segments of the population (see Tables A-13 and A-14).

It may, therefore, be justifiably maintained that in the forties the principal vehicles of hostility to the existing social order were the teachers and students, and the center of gravity of the Communist movement lay not in the factories or other workers' establishments but in the colleges and schools. Indeed, for a time in the forties, and particularly in the year of the *Wathbah*, the colleges in Baghdād had more the character of revolutionary beehives than of educational institutions.

A number of consequences followed from the centrality of colleges and schools in the life of the party. On the one hand, the party gained the power which the fervor and idealism of students generate. But with the increment in power came undoubted weaknesses. In the first place, insofar as the party depended on the students, it tended to have a semi-seasonal character. The rhythm of party life became to some extent a function of the rhythm of school life. Thus vacations or examination periods decreased the likelihood, or at least reduced the chances, of serious or large-scale party action in Baghdād or Baṣrah, and in certain country towns, like Kūt or Ba'qūbah, brought the party at times to a complete standstill. In the second place, students being the least anchored in life, were also potentially the least stable of party members. There was no surety that once they settled down in an occupational sense or became tied to wives and children they would continue in the movement. They are thus to be accounted as another factor in the party's chronic instability.[26]

How did the schools and colleges come to be real nurseries of revolution? Why did communism find a welcome among the teachers and students? The circumstances of a general order which urged various classes of Iraqis towards Communist ideas in the forties have been already described.[27] It would, therefore, suffice here to refer briefly to particular and more specifically relevant causes.

"As is the teacher, so is the school." The Communist leadership was as heedful as the government was heedless of the advice expressed in this old adage. Who was more sensitively placed than the teacher to sow the seeds of revolt in the heart of the rising generation or to implant in its mind the relation between communism and the problems of everyday life? But the

attention given to the teacher by the Communist party in itself explains nothing. The really important point is his openness to its appeals. At the bottom of this was the fact that in the forties he was in an utterly disaffected frame of mind. For one thing, he derived no satisfaction from his work. The curriculum and materials of instruction imposed upon him were dull, lifeless, and irrelevant, and deadened any natural initiative or resourcefulness he may have possessed. The contrast afforded by Marxist ideas–simply formulated and applied concretely to things he saw and felt on every hand–can be imagined. Moreover, communism brought enthusiasm into his dreary little world and elevated him in his own eyes. But the real cause, the effective cause that drove him toward communism, was the hand-to-mouth existence that he led. Except for an assistant professor at the School of Engineering, all the Communist teachers, it will be remembered, taught in elementary and secondary schools (see Table A-4). The basic pay of elementary schoolteachers in the forties ranged from 6 to 21 dīnārs a month,[28] and that of the overwhelming majority of secondary schoolteachers from 18 to 35 dīnārs.[29] In other words, the elementary and secondary schoolteachers, who between them accounted in 1948-1949 for 38.0% of all government officials,[30] belonged in greatest part to the lowest classes (classes III and IV) of the Iraqi civil service. Moreover, increments to their pay were not automatic nor dependent in the first place upon their length or excellence of service, but upon the availability of a vacancy,[31] and vacancies were rarer in the forties in the cadre of teachers than in the cadre of other civil servants. The key point, however, is not that their earnings were meager or that their opportunities for promotion were limited, but that their basic pay had lost much of its real value and that the high-cost-of-living allowance, added to it, had little relationship to the prices, which in the war and immediate postwar periods were steadily and inordinately rising.[32] Worse than that, this economic trend, while driving teachers and other Iraqis with fixed money incomes to despair, enriched in a conspicuous manner, as already noted,[33 a] relatively small number of merchants, landowners, and speculators. It was natural enough under the circumstances that the teachers, the most socially conscious of the adversely affected classes and the poorest and neediest of the Iraqi intelligentsia, should come to be estranged from the prevailing order, and to seek in communism or

other protest movements a way of escape from the hardships that afflicted them.

If the teacher was the heart and soul of the school, what could have had greater strategic significance in the entire educational system than the institutions that produced teachers, and preeminently the Higher Teachers' Training College in Baghdād? A center for the supply of teachers to all parts of Iraq, it became also a center of Communist interest (see Tables A-4 and A-9). The aim was, of course, to make the Communist outlook part and parcel of the graduate's professional equipment. A factor inherent in the situation–the unattractiveness of the teacher's pay–facilitated the task of the party. In this college, as not in others, tuition, board, and lodging were provided free of charge. Its students were also given pocket money, even allowances for barbering, occasionally clothes, and were guaranteed employment on graduation. As a result, it stood in a category of its own and had a distinctive composition. Most of its students came from very poor families, while in the other colleges middle and lower middle-class boys predominated. The middle-class families felt also, to be sure, the pinch of the war and postwar inflationary trend. But if here too the economic factor was at work, its explanatory value could easily be overestimated. It does not account, for example, for the relatively large proportion of student-Communists in the School of Engineering (see Table A-9): in this instance the chance presence of a Communist on the faculty clearly exerted its effect. Moreover, in all colleges and secondary schools, the enthusiasm of youth for ideals, indignation at the sufferings of others–in short, the most disinterested and unadulterated of motives–played their part. The suppression of debate, the strictures on independent thought, in general the police outlook toward colleges, no doubt also nourished revolutionary sentiments.

One other respect in which the schools and colleges had significance ought to be mentioned: they were the chief springs that fed the female contingent of the party. Thus no less than 80.4 percent of the women Communists were students (see Table A-18). But in general, women were very thinly represented in the party: they formed in the forties only 2.5 percent of the members of the Central Committees, 1.9 percent of the middle echelons, and 5.3 percent of the known lower echelons and "active" rank and file (see Table A-16). This in part reflects the Iraqi social situation,

but is perhaps also a peculiarity of all secret Communist parties.[34] At any rate, as could be expected, all the known women Communists belonged to the Greater Baghdād party organization (see Table A-19), the resistance to the liberation of women being narrower in the capital than in the provinces. One striking feature is the predominance of Sunnī Arab women (60.9 percent of the total: see Table A-17), which appears to be only a symptom of their greater educational opportunities.

The key role of the schools and colleges manifested itself also in the relatively high educational level of the party membership: 52.5 percent of the top leadership, 22.5 percent of the middle echelons, and 16.4 percent of the known lower echelons and "active" rank and file had a college education. However, 20.0 percent of this latter group had had no education whatever (see Table A-20).

Moreover, the presence of students in great strength was bound to influence the age pattern of the membership, but with regard to all Communists irrespective of occupation one fact is scarcely in dispute: youth provided the vital force of the party. As is evident from Tables A-21 to A-23, 32.1 percent of the members of Fahd's Central Committees, 66.7 percent of the members of the "unauthorized" committees, 61.2 percent of the provincial *mas'ūls*, 68.3 percent of the members of the local party committees, 62.0 percent of the middle echelons of Greater Baghdād, and 74.1 percent of the known lower echelons and "active" rank and file were under the age of twenty-six. The same tables clearly show that the number of party members above the age of forty was quite insignificant. This situation is not necessarily a partial mirroring of the age structure of the Iraqi population. It is true that 59.4 percent of all Iraqi males (excluding nomads) were in 1947 below the age of thirty (see Table A-24). On the other hand–to make only one contrast–while no less than 46.7 percent of the lower echelons and "active" rank and file of the party were between the ages of twelve and twenty-one, only about 15.0 percent of all Iraqi males were in that age group.

The concentration in Baghdād of all college students and of no less than 40 percent of secondary school students explains to a certain degree the overconcentration of the activity of the party in the capital (see Table A-26), but at bottom both phenomena are really consequences of the fact that Baghdād had drawn to itself in the decades after World War I much of the

vitality of the country. The flow of people from the provinces to the metropolis, which is an aspect of this development, accounts at least in part for the difference between the percentage of party members active in Baghdād (see Table A-26) and the percentage of those born in that city (see Table A-25). But a number of other and more significant points emerge from the tables just referred to. First, the party was in the forties an essentially urban phenomenon: out of 1,058 Communists belonging to all echelons and the "active" rank and file, only 9 (that is, 0.9 percent) were active in villages.[35] Second, the Kurdish provinces of Sulaimāniyyah and Arbīl provided a percentage of party strength acutely out of proportion to their percentage in the total urban population. Third, the Shī'ī provinces of 'Amārah, Ḥillah, Muntafiq, and Karbalā' were relatively important membership-feeding sources, whereas the Sunnī provinces of Dulaim and Mosul, and especially the former, were of little consequence in the life of the party. Lastly, Baṣrah–Iraq's seaport–and to a lesser extent Kirkūk–Iraq's principal oil center–figured prominently in the party's scheme of activities. Interestingly enough, only one out of the five *mas'ūls* and one out of the ten members of the local party committees of Kirkūk belonged to it by birth, which points not only to a strong movement of people into the province but also to the eschewing of communism by its Turkoman middle classes. The Turkomans, it should be explained, had had close links with the bureaucracy of Ottoman times: this, added to their industriousness, materialized into an advantageous economic position.

Tables A-27 to A-29, relating to the ethnic and sectarian complexion of the party, while reinforcing many of the points just made, place them in a more appropriate perspective. One of the instructive facts which these tables reveal and which at once leaps into view is the relative strength of the Sunnī Arabs in the higher levels (that is, in Fahd's Central Committees) and their relative weakness in the middle and lower levels of the party. In other words, the position the Sunnī Arabs occupied in the party somewhat paralleled the position they occupied in the Iraqi society as a whole. This suggests that the social advantages enjoyed by the Sunnīs, at least in the past–in the days of the Ottomans, and which had in part their roots in prejudice or calculation, now operated without the help of these factors–in a natural way, so to say, and irrespective of existing social policy. In clearer terms, the Arab Sunnīs led in the party as they led in the society because by

historical preparation they were more fitted than other Moslems for the tasks of leadership. However, their relative position of dominance in the party, when viewed over a length of time, shows a steady decline: they formed 60 percent of the members of the Central Committee in 1935, but only 40 percent in 1941-1942 and 31.3 percent in 1945-1947.[36] As in the society at large, the other elements were enhancing their own weight, but the change is also explained by the transformation of the Communist party in the forties from an overwhelmingly Arab organization to one more representative of the racial and religious heterogeneity of Iraq.

In absolute numerical terms, the dominant place in the party belonged to the underprivileged Shīʻī Arabs: they constituted 36.6 percent of the middle echelons (see Table A-28), and 33.6 percent of the known lower echelons and "active" rank and file (see Table A-29). But Shīʻī Arabs totaled in 1947 no less than 41 percent of urban Iraqis, and 51 percent of all Iraqis, so that in reality they were underrepresented in the party. This fact, and their secondary role at the top level, lend hardly any substance to the notion that Iraqi communism is little more than old Shīʻīsm in a modern garb.

The relatively high proportion of Kurds in the party is to a considerable degree connected with the sense of frustrated national rights under which they labored. Their insignificance in the Central Committees of 1941-1948 seems at first glance an anomaly, but is fully explained by their late entry into Fahd's organization. Their preponderance in the "unauthorized" committees reflected in part their copious flow into the movement in the years 1947-1948, but was more truly a byproduct of the confusion that seized the party subsequently.

A great point is sometimes made of the role of the Jews in Communist history. In this connection, there are a number of facts that cannot be successfully disputed. In the first place, Iraqis of the Jewish faith took no part whatever in the founding of the Communist party in 1935, and came into the picture only after 1940. Even then, and until the arrest of Fahd in 1947, they were of no considerable account in the top layers of the party command. None belonged to the leading nucleus, the "stable party center," or to the Politbureau. Their representation in the various Central Committees of the period 1941-1947 or at the 1944 Party Conference and the 1945 Party Congress was not very marked, whether absolutely or in a relative sense (see Tables 19-1, 19-2, 19-3, A-1, and A-2). They did,

however, exercise leading functions in the League Against Zionism and in the women's organization of the party and, concentrated heavily as they were in the capital, contributed in strength to the middle and lower echelons of the Greater Baghdād party organization (see Tables A-28 and A-29). Moreover, for brief periods after the capture of Fahd–to be precise, in April to August 1947 and in December 1948 to February 1949–Jews guided the destinies of the party.[37] Access to the top leadership occurred in both instances in conditions of utter disarray, and primarily by virtue of the penetrative ability of the individuals concerned, and in the former instance in defiance of Fahd's explicit orders from prison.[38]

The conspicuousness of the Christians in the party can be essentially understood in terms of the social disabilities to which religious minorities are normally subject. But in the case of the Jews this was really a minor factor. They do not appear to have minded much their exclusion from certain political or social roles, and in an economic sense were better off than all the other communities. Indeed their relative prosperity amidst general distress became a source of danger to them. This factor, and to a much greater extent the aftereffects of the advance of Zionism in Palestine, combined to place their entire position in Iraq in jeopardy. It is, therefore, in the first place to a growing sense of insecurity that has to be attributed the drift of Jews toward communism in the forties. "Minorities," read a 1946 handbill issued in the name of the "Free Jewish Youth," "cannot have peace of mind nor will their social existence be secure until the Iraqi working class attains power: this is what drives the vanguard of the conscious Jewish youth towards the party of the toiling masses. . . ."[39]

It remains to say a few words on the membership of the military organization of the party. The known soldier-Communists totaled in the forties 285, that is, 15.6 percent of all known party members (see Table A-4), and between 0.6 and 0.7 percent of the entire strength of the Iraqi army.[40] Out of the 285, 21.7 percent were military students, 44.6 percent privates, 9.1 percent soldier-craftsmen, 22.5 percent noncommissioned officers, and only 2.1 percent commissioned officers. On the other hand, the latter provided 66.7 percent of the military component of the higher and middle echelons of the party (consult Table A-30).

The available data appear also to reveal that the party had succeeded relatively more with the Kurdish and Shī'ī soldiery than with other elements (see Tables A-32 and A-33). The high proportion of Arab Sunnīs, as that of Sunnī Kurds, in the higher and middle echelons is primarily explained by the preponderance of the two denominations in the Iraqi officer corps. In terms of geographical distribution, it would seem–as Tables A-31 and A-33 suggest–that the penetration was deepest in the military establishments situated in and around Baghdād and among the units of the Third Division, which had its headquarters in the capital. There was also pronounced activity in the Reserve Mechanized Brigade at Jalawlā',[41] the Third Communications' Battalion at Ba'qūbah, an engineering regiment at Mosul,

and in the units of the Second Division at Kirkūk and the First Division at Dīwāniyyah, Baṣrah, and Nāṣiriyyah. As Table A-33 makes clear, nearly all branches of the armed forces were affected, but the Communications ’School and the communications’ units intensely more than the other schools or services. The artillery and armored units also appear to have come in for especial attention. The relatively large number of infantrymen-Communists is only a reflection of the disproportionately large number of infantrymen in the army.

On the whole, the progress of communism among the soldiery was more serious than the authorities had anticipated. In part, and insofar as the Kurdish party members were concerned, the explanation could be sought in the discontent generated by “disciplinary” actions against the Kurdish tribes, and in particular by the execution in 1946 of the four Kurdish officers who had fought for the rebellious Mulla Mustafa of Barzān. But in general, the root cause lay in the lamentable condition in which the army was left after the failure of the military uprising of 1941. Soldiers went about in shabby uniforms and torn boots, and lived in dilapidated barracks. In the specially hard times of the forties they could rely only on a pitiable pay and miserly food rations. It was a calculated state of affairs, and was meant by the regent and Nūrī as-Sa‘īd as a sort of collective punishment.

28

THE FINANCES OF THE PARTY

Little light can be shed on the state of the party finances. The accompanying Table 28-1 comprises much of the information that is on hand. It shows that in the period January to September of 1948, the total receipts of the party amounted to about £2,543 and its total expenditure to about £2,170.

The money came in part from monthly membership dues. The rates for both members and candidate members, as fixed by a plenary meeting of the Central Committee held in February of 1945,[1] were as follows:

Monthly earnings	*Rate*
Up to 6 dīnārs[2]	1%
Over 6 and up to 15 dīnārs	2%
Over 15 and up to 25 dīnārs	3%
Over 25 dīnārs	5%

However, members with three or more dependents or members who had enrolled in other organizations with the party's approval were exempted from half of the dues.

Donations by individuals, in most instances by non-Communists and, in particular, by sympathetic merchants, formed another–and in 1948 the principal–source of party funds. For example, 95 dīnārs came from a Shī'ī trader of Ḥillah, and another 10 dīnārs from a *ṣarrāf*– money-changer–of Najaf. However, according to the first *mas'ūl*, in the year referred to the largest amounts were collected by party members of Jewish origin from Jewish shopkeepers in the cloth and Shurjah markets.[3]

The main heads of expenditure were: rent on party houses–the party had five such houses in Baghdād alone; support for the families of imprisoned Communists; salaries for professional party members–the first *mas'ūl,* for example, received a monthly stipend of 15 dīnārs; disbursements reaching a yearly total of 424 dīnārs in connection with the printing and distribution of the clandestine *A1-Qā'idah;* and subsidies, amounting to 150 dīnārs in 1948, to the legal *Al/-Asās*.[4] The peak of expenditure, reached in May (see Table 28-1), appears to be related to the increase in the number of protests, strikes, and demonstrations sponsored by the party in that month. The insignificance of the amount spent in the month of the *Wathbah* (January) seems rather strange, and remains inexplicable. It must be remembered, however, that on the whole the party's capacity for action did not depend so much on its pecuniary resources as on its ideological influence.

TABLE 28-1

Summary of the Iraqi Communist Party's Receipts and Expenditure for the Months January-September 1948

Month	Receipts dīnārs fils	Expenditure dīnārs fils
January	168.995	89.150
February	308.971	205.855
March	487.299	218.100
April	183.660	200.285
May	307.650	492.380
June	386.180	204.350
July	104.900	222.430
August	278.103	345.703
September	316.998	191.648
Total	2,542.756	2,169.901

1 dīnār = 1,000 fils = £1.

Source: The summary is in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

The figures for January to September 1948 cannot be said to be typical of the party revenue and expenditure in any earlier or subsequent period. As has been indicated more than once, the party recurrently suffered sharp ups and downs of fortune. It would suffice to mention that from October 1948 to June 1949–a time of troubles for the Communists–the inflow of

donations almost entirely ceased, and the party or, more accurately, its remnants, lived in dire penury.

It is appropriate to introduce at this point two other tables–Tables 28-2 and 28-3–relating to the finances, first of the "nationalist today, Communist tomorrow" People's party and, second, of the National Democrats who then constituted, in a numerical sense, Iraq's strongest legal organization. Unfortunately, the figures for the latter two parties refer to the financial year 1946-1947, whereas those for the Iraqi Communist party refer to the year 1948. This no doubt detracts from their comparability, the more so as the first half of 1948, bearing as it did the impress of the *Wathbah*, was a period of a marked growth in the life of the parties and probably, therefore, in their money receipts and expenditure. All the same, in the absence of more pertinent data, we cannot refrain from making the following comparison:

TABLE 28-2

The People's Party's Revenue and Expenditure for the Period 1 April 1946 to 31 January 1947

Revenue			*Expenditures*		
Main sources	*Dīnārs fils*[a]	*%*	*Main heads*	*Dīnārs fils*[a]	*%*
Contributions	357.409	46.1	Salaries	31.000	4.1
Membership dues	361.362	46.6	Rent of party house	350.000	45.8
Other (sale of programs, lottery etc.)	55.579	7.3	Party meetings	62.273	8.2
			Cost of furniture[b]	225.050	29.5
			Printing and stationery	95.220	12.4
Total	774.350	100.0		763.543	100.0

[a]1 dīnār = 1,000 fils = £ 1.

[b]This was not a regular item of expenditure but applied only to the year under consideration, this being the year of the founding of the party.

Source: Report dated 15 February 1947 from assistant commissioner of police, Baghdād Province, to the minister of interior, in Police File entitled "The People's Party."

TABLE 28-3

The National Democratic Party's Revenue and Expenditure for the Period

1 April 1946 to 28 February 1947

Revenue			Expenditures		
Main sources	*Dīnārs fils*[a]	*%*	*Main heads*	*Dīnārs fils*[a]	*%*
Contributions	404.232	20.7	Salaries	308.969	16.2
Membership dues	435.375	22.4	Rent of party house	440.000	23.1
Loan from *Al-Ahālī*, the party's paper	940.000	48.3	Party meetings	231.183	12.1
Other (sales of party literature, etc.)	165.366	8.6	Furniture[b]	223.820	11.8
			Printing and stationery	392.552	20.6
			Travel	78.800	4.1
			Other (telephone, water, electricity, loan to local branch, etc.)	229.506	12.1
Total	1,944.973	100.0		1,904.830	100.0

[a]1 dīnār = 1,000 fils = £ 1.

[b]This was not a regular item of expenditure but applied only to the year under consideration, this being the year of the founding of the party.

Source: Report dated 5 April 1947 from assistant commissioner of police, Baghdād Province, to the minister of interior, in Police File entitled "The National Democratic Party," I.

Party	*Average monthly revenue* (in rounded dīnārs)	*Average monthly expenditure* (in rounded dīnārs)	*Period for which average was calculated*
Iraqi Communist party	283	241	January-September 1948
People's party	77	76	April 1946-January 1947
National Democratic party	177	173	April 1946-February 1947

These figures suggest that in 1948 the Communist party was possibly in as strong a financial position as the National Democratic party, and probably better off. In this connection it may be mentioned that in April 1947 the Interior Ministry's inspector of accounts reported that the National Democrats were in a bad shape financially; that, although some of them were quite wealthy, none had contributed large sums to the party;[5] and that out of the 6,961 members that the party counted, only 24 had paid their dues regularly and in full.[6] In fact, had its leader, Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, not advanced the profits of his paper, *Al-Ahālī*, it would scarcely have been able to keep its feet. It is not without significance that the People's party, with only less than one-third of the membership of the National Democratic

party,[7] well-nigh approximated its revenue from dues and contributions– assuming, of course, that all the books were in order. As to the expenditure of these parties, there is no need to say anything, the relevant tables being sufficiently clear.

PART V

THE PARTY IN THE YEARS 1949-1955, OR THE PERIOD OF THE ASCENDANCY OF THE KURDS IN THE PARTY

29

BAHĀ'U-D-DĪN NŪRĪ REBUILDS THE PARTY

In the fifties, as in the forties, the tendency to communism or, at least, the revolutionary impulse, inhered in the existing social situation.[1] The severest repressive measures could have had, therefore, no lasting effect. The year 1949–one of the gloomiest in party history–is a telling testimony. In its first half, the underground was literally laid waste; in its second half the few and solitary Communists who had evaded arrest and had not abandoned faith were finding one another and attracting new converts. Already in late June, the Central Committee had been reconstituted (see Table 29-1). In July, clandestine notices, written now in longhand, were again passing around. In August, a stenciling machine, smuggled with one of the army units returning from Palestine, reached the party.[2] In September, there was a setback, two of the three members of the revived committee being arrested, but others quickly took their place. In November, a new internal journal, *Al-Injāz* ("The Accomplishment") was put out. Finally, in February 1950, the old *Al-Qā'idah* reappeared. Simultaneously, a policy of "orderly retreat" was announced, and a campaign to rebuild the party under the watchword "Resuscitate the Principles of Comrade Fahd" got under way.[3] To shut out the influence of the "class enemy" and purge from the ranks "the weak-willed, the opportunists, and other unworthy elements," all members, even old-time comrades, had to reapply for admission into the party and to pass through a new probationary period.[4] Moreover, in the interest of greater security the cell system was for the time being replaced by individual contact, so that in effect the party became a union of individuals instead of a union of organizations. Not unrelated to these revivatory measures was the arrival in Russia in the course of 1950–if a telegraphic despatch from the Iraqi Legation in Moscow to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Baghdād

can be depended upon–of about two hundred young Iraqis for purposes of systematic training in insurrectionary practice.[5]

TABLE 29-1

Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī's Central Committees (25 June 1949 to 13 April 1953)

Name	Nation and sect	Date and place of birth	Profession	Education
1st Committee, 25 June-September 1949				
Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī[a]	Kurd, Sunnī	1927, Dālūjah[b]	Night student	Secondary
Zakī Waṭbān[a]	Arab, Sunnī	1924, Baṣrah	Technician	?
Hādī Sa'īd	Kurd, Sunnī	1928, Arbīl	Student	Elementary Teachers' College
2nd Committee, September 1949-August 1951				
Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī	(See above)			
Bilāl 'Azīz	Kurd, Sunnī	1929, Arbīl	Student	Elementary Teachers' College
Ya'qūb Manaḥīm Qojmān	(See Table 23-1)			
'Aṭshān Ḍayyūl al-Azairjāwī	Arab, Shī'ī	1921, Nāṣiriyyah	Ex-army lieutenant	Military College (Supply Division)
Ṣādiq Ja'far al-Falāḥī[d]	Arab, Shī'ī	1919, Kāḍhimiyyah	Textile worker	Elementary
3rd Committee, August 1951-13 April 1953				
Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī, secretary	(See above)			
'Aṭshān Ḍayyūl al-Azairjāwī	(See above)			
Ṣādiq Ja'far al-Falāḥī	(See above)			
Nāṣir 'Abbūd	Arab, Shī'ī	1927, Baṣrah	Port worker; mechanic	Elementary
Muḥammad Rāḍī Shubbar	Arab, Shī'ī	1928, Kāḍhimiyyah	Clearing agent, customs	Secondary
Bāqir Ja'far Muḥammad	Arab, Shī'ī	1924, Kāḍhimiyyah	Brick worker	Elementary Qur'ān school
'Abdallah 'Umar Muḥyī-d-Dīn	Kurd, Sunnī	1921, Kirkūk	Flour mill worker	Elementary

[a]Nūrī was first *mas'ūl* until July 1949, when he turned over the responsibility for the cells in southern Iraq to Waṭbān, retaining control over the cells in the north; but on the arrest of Waṭbān in August he reassumed full charge.

[b]A village in the Qarah Dāgh district of the province of Sulaimāniyyah.

Class origin	Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement	Subsequent history
Lower middle class; son of a religious teacher and small *mallāk*	1944 (17)	In prison 1953-1958; member of Politbureau 1958-1961; member of Central Committee 1964 to date.
Lower middle class	1946 (22)	Arrested 1949; left party.
Lower middle class	1945 (17)[c]	Arrested 1949; left party.
Lower middle class	1948 (19)	Arrested 1951; left party.
Son of a peasant policeman from Āl-Azairij tribe	1944 (23)	Member, Central Committee 1955-1957; 1958-1960 had direct charge of the military organization of the party.
Working class; son of a textile worker	1945 (26)	Arrested April 1953; escaped June 1953; rearrested after serving another term on Central Committee; in prison 1954-1958; member Baghdād Committee 1962-1963.
Working class; son of a worker	1947 (20)	Arrested 1954; escaped prison; member Central Committee 1955-1963 and 1964-1965, but inactive in late fifties on account of consumption; dropped from committee at the plenary meeting of 9/10 October 1965.
Lower middle class; son of a *sayyid* and petty trader	1946 (18)	Left party 1955; now a commission agent.
Working class; son of a soap factory worker	1947 (23)	Arrested April 1953; defected July 1957; now a police agent.
Working class	1946 (25)	?

[c]Formerly member Ruzkari Kurd.

[d]Co-opted in mid-1950.

Sources: Report of Directorate of Investigations, No. 18428 of 19 June 1953, and undated statement by Staff Major Ṣāliḥ Mahdī as-Samarrā'ī Iraqi Police File No. 8025; statement of Bāqir Ja'far Muḥammad dated 20 July 1957 in File No. 12690; conversation with Bāqir Ja'far, February 1967; 1963 statement of Ṣadiq Ja'far al-Falāḥī to the police in File No. QS/45 and Files No. 8025, 8261, 29213, and 6715.

If before 1951 had passed the party was back on its feet, the credit clearly belongs to a quiet, soft-spoken young Kurd, one Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī, the son of a propertied *mudarris*–religious teacher–in the Sah Raḥīmain Mosque of Sulaimāniyyah, and a relative, on the women's side, of the well-known Kurdish chieftain, Shaikh Maḥmūd. Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī was, to be sure, no Fahd. He had little revolutionary experience. His grasp of theory was none too solid. His sentiments were rather simple–love for the Kurds and an unquestioning faith in the future of communism. His outstanding characteristics were his perseverance and courage in adversity. As to his life, not very much is known. According to his own account, he was born in 1927 in Dālūjah, a village in the district of Qarah Dāgh. Until the age of twelve the only school he had attended–as he himself put it in 1954 in a letter to his wife Madeleine, then a party member and an inmate of the Women's Prison–was "the forest with its huge rocks and high hills, and the savage valleys inhabited by wild boars."[6] In 1939, however, he left his native village and went with his father to Sulaimāniyyah, the rallying point of Kurdish malcontents, and a hub of radical thought. It was while undergoing schooling there that he fell under the influence of Jamah Jalāw, one of his teachers, who awakened in him his first feeling for communism and dissipated many of the Islamic assumptions of his childhood. In 1944 he adhered to the party. Four years later, having acquitted himself well in the days of the *Wathbah*, he was elevated to a cell organizer. The depletion in the cadre caused by the unremitting pressure of the police and the defection of key Communists brought him in April 1949 to the position of *mas'ūl* of the Sulaimāniyyah Local Committee. Before two months had gone by, and when he was barely twenty-two, he found himself at the head of the heavily stricken party. At first, he chose to share responsibility with an Arab technician from Baṣrah by the name of Zakī Waṭbān, but on the arrest of the latter in September 1949 he assumed full charge and, notwithstanding a reorganization of the party center in August of 1951 (see Table 29-1), remained, at least until February 1953, in firm and uncontested control.[7]

TABLE 29-2

Distribution of Al-Qā‘idah, *Organ of the Communist Party, in the Autumn of 1952 Compared with That in 1947-1948*

Province	Urban population of province as % of total 1951 urban population of Iraq (estimate)	No. of copies (1952)	No. of copies (1947-1948)[a]
Arab Shī‘ī provinces			
Karbalā’	6.6	200	60
Muntafiq	3.7	75	120
Ḥillah	4.8	100	80
Dīwāniyyah	5.5	100	40
‘Amārah	4.1	125	100
Kūt	3.3	120	140
Arab Sunnī provinces			
Dulaim	2.5	25[b]	–
Kurdish provinces			
Arbīl	3.3	not available	240[c]
Sulaimāniyyah	3.7	not available	240[c]
Mixed provinces[d]			
Baghdād	31.0		
Greater Baghdād		not available	1,380
Rest of province		30[e]	–
Baṣrah	8.7	400	280
Mosul	13.3	120	140
Diyālah	3.3	not available	40
Kirkūk	6.2	300	140

[a]See Table 26-1.

[b]All distributed in the town of ‘Ānah.

[c]Figures for Kurdish edition of *Al-Qā‘idah*, i.e., of *Azādī* (Freedom).

[d]For predominant ethnic and sectarian character of these provinces, consult Table 27-2.

[e]All distributed in the town of Takrīt.

The recovery of the party reflected itself in a new spell of revolutionary activity. As is apparent from the accompanying table (Table 29-2) on the distribution of *Al-Qā‘idah*, the oil center at Kirkūk, the Baṣrah port, and the sensitive Shī‘ī province of Karbalā’ were the object of a sharp increase in effort. Greater Baghdād and Kurdistan received, no doubt, their due share of attention, but the purely Arab Sunnī areas–Dulaim, the northern districts of Baghdād province, and the bulk of Mosul town–remained in party perspectives of decidely marginal significance.

The steadiest flow of propaganda was directed at the hired laborers. The seeming insensitiveness into which this class had fallen in 1949 and 1950 gradually passed. Without troubling to obtain a license from the authorities, workers-agitators, acting under the instructions of the party, launched in the autumn of 1951, a "Workers' Unions' Permanent Bureau," rented a house in an-Nu'mān Street in Baghdād, attracted to it the hands at the cigarette and textile factories, and the printing, construction, and mechanical workmen, and throughout November held weekly meetings, organized protests, and openly agitated against Nūrī as-Sa'īd's "government by starvation." Outside Baghdād, the movement among the workers took on more vehement forms. In June 1952, there was a strike, a clash, and casualties at the British military base of Ḥabbāniyyah. From 23 to 27 August widespread protests paralyzed the port and water and electric installations at Baṣrah. Ensuing encounters between the demonstrators and the police brought death to three workmen and injury to twenty-nine others.[8]

In the countryside, two revolts flared up in late 1952 and early 1953, one in the south in 'Amārah among the peasants of the Arab Shī'ī tribe of Āl-Azairij, the other in the north in Arbīl among the peasants of the Kurdish tribe of Diza'i. Both revolts flowed fundamentally from a deep-seated agrarian discontent. However, in the Diza'i rising, in which at least ten peasants were killed and a few thousands driven from their homes, the party appears to have taken a direct hand. An internal party source admits and deplores that the Communists "alone carried arms . . . and clung only to the military command, forgetting that they are political leaders"–a course which led to defeat and loss of support.[9] On the other hand, the Communists had, it is certain, no determining role in the Azairij movement. The bitter feelings of the peasants were aroused by a decision on the part of the government alienating the customary lands of the tribe to the dominant shaikhs and their families. Bitterness thickened into a refusal to pay dues, and eventually–on 5 November–into a bloody clash. Two of the peasants were killed and a shaikh's man-at-arms was burned to death. The alarmed tribal chieftains sent out a cry for help. A mobile police force arrived on the spot and brutally put down the rebellion. Many of the peasant tribesmen fell. Throughout, the principal motive force was the tribal *sirkāls*, that is, the inferior chiefs who had direct charge of cultivation. It must be borne in

mind, however, that the Communist party had had a footing among Āl-Azairij since the days of Fahd, that the very first peasant-Communist, Fi'l Damad, had been a *sirkāl* and had labored with this tribe,[10] and that the watchwords of the party had left a mark upon its consciousness. One of the contemporary party appeals, addressed specifically to the Azairij peasant reads: "The land is yours; you are its real master. Rise against the criminal feudal lord; deny him your product; resist him boldly; and strike down the members of his *ḥūshiyyah*[11] that attack and rob you. And remember that you are not alone, that the workers, students, intellectuals, and all good people are with you." The peasants were illiterate, but rural teachers or health or agricultural officers, members of the party, read the appeals to them.[12]

The risings in 'Amārah and Arbīl and the workers' unrest in Baṣrah and Ḥabbāniyyah were as nothing to the storm which broke out in Baghdād in November of 1952, and to which close attention must now be given.

30

THE *INTIFĀḌAH* OF NOVEMBER

The *Intifāḍah* of November 1952 was the continuation of the *Wathbah* of January 1948. At work in both uprisings were the same material facts, the same first causes. Except that popular discontent had dug a deeper course owing to the loss of Palestine, little had really changed in Iraq in the intervening years. The same regency governed in the old manner, that is, as it deemed fit, through the same narrow ring of privileged oligarchs, under the same thin pretense of constitutional politics. On occasion, as before, the parties, the publicists, the colleges drew a breath. The regime had to concede that much to preserve itself. But, as before, the freedoms hesitantly granted were hurriedly snatched back, or allowed only in form and frustrated in practice. Lower-class Baghdād, the Baghdād of the *shargāwiyyas,* of the mud huts, still lived in squalor, ate polluted food, and drudged long hours at impossible wages. The minority that enjoyed the power had heard the mounting rumble beneath its feet, and begun to suspect that Iraq could get along without it. The fall of Farūq in Egypt in July of 1952 had pressed the point home. But, locked in the logic of its own position, it could not bring itself to grant any genuine concession to the classes contending against it.

The opposition, on its side, had been able to draw one appropriate inference: discord had caused the *Wathbah* to fall amiss; without a closing of ranks it would be idle to enter into a new test of strength. Gradually the various antigovernmental forces–the Independents, the National Democrats, the United Popular Front, and the Partisans of Peace–drew close to one another. The Independents were now, as ever, essentially a party of the right but scarcely, on that account, less zealous than others in the advocacy of reform. The National Democrats had since 1950 officially committed themselves to the political precepts of "democratic socialism."[1] The United

Popular Front, founded in May 1951 and led by Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, an ex-premier, was little more than an incidental group of ex-ministers and ex-deputies who, in their majority, merely itched for office.[2] The Partisans of Peace first made themselves felt in mid-1950, rapidly progressed after that among the members of the professions, and, under the leadership of ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb Maḥmūd, the president of the Lawyers' Association, served now as the principal forward arm of the Iraqi Communist party. With elements so diverse, the road to a coalition could hardly have been untroubled by obstacles. The Communists happened also to be in one of their anti-bourgeois moods. More than that, Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, a conservative at heart, was not easy in his mind about cooperating with the Peace Partisans. On November 11, 1952, he expressed his misgivings to Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, the leader of the National Democratic party. The inclusion of the Peace Partisans in any front entailed, he felt, too great a risk: the chief levers might fall into their hands. [3] But ach-Chādirchī swept his objections away. Eventually, a formal understanding was reached at a secret conclave held on November 17, and attended by Fā'iq as-Sāmarrā'ī on behalf of the Independents and by ach-Chādirchī, al-Hāshimī, and ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb Maḥmūd on behalf of their respective organizations. The understanding involved the creation of a "Contact Committee," with the object of facilitating the exchange of views and ensuring uniformity of action. On al-Hāshimī's insistence, however, no explicit mention was made of the Peace Partisans in the text of the agreement, the indefinite terms "and any other organization" being used instead.[4]

Except for the Peace Partisans, who held no converse with the authorities, the oppositional forces had earlier–on October 28–addressed petitions to the regent in which they insisted that the head of state should reign but not govern. They also demanded the granting of liberties and a change from the rigged, two-stage method of voting to a free and direct electoral system. The Independents and National Democrats pressed beyond this for a limit on ownership in land, a policy of nonalignment, and the abolition of the treaty with England.[5] The regent acknowledged, in his reply, the need for reform, but denied that the matter lay within his powers. There was a responsible government in office. There was a properly elected Parliament. It was all up to them.[6] The make-believe of a due process of law would not be laid aside. However, on 3 November, as tension heightened,

the regent found himself compelled to invite the leaders in opposition and the favored circle of senior politicians to a meeting at the palace, but the discussion that ensued, instead of grappling with the problems of the day, degenerated into an irrelevant wrangle between al-Hāshimī and the regent. To the more serious segments of the opposition, peaceable protests seemed now a mere waste of breath; the struggle had to be conducted by other means.

On the morning of 22 November–five days after the formation of the "Contact Committee"–banners were raised in various parts of Baghdād. Workers, craftsmen, and street vendors at once sprang into action. College students, who since the nineteenth had been on an ostensibly non-political strike, merged with them. Before long a terrible seething agitated both the east and west sides of the city. Shouts of "Down with the Treacherous Regent 'Abd-ul-Ilāh!" went up. There were also cries of "Anglo-American Imperialists, Leave our Country!" In al-Faḍl quarter on the left bank, the crowds clashed with the police. According to the Special Branch report for that day, firearms had to be used, as the demonstrators threw stones and fired shots on a retreating police force and threatened to overwhelm al-Faḍl police station. One person was killed and fifty-two others, including thirty-eight policemen, were wounded. The incident only aggravated the passions of the crowds and led that same evening to the hurried exit of the government in power–that of Muṣtafa al-'Umarī, a *mallāk*-politician from Mosul.[7]

On 23 November the agitation, instead of abating, broadened and intensified. It also assumed a more distinct plebeian aspect. The students, who had up to then been conspicuous, fell into the background. Of the twenty-five wounded demonstrators that the authorities seized on that day, only four were students, whereas ten were workers; six, craftsmen; two, street vendors; two, unemployed; and one, a clerk of a private firm.[8] Moreover, if on the previous day it was possible to distinguish two active organizing centers for the demonstrations, one unmistakably Communist and the other that of the League of Nationalist Youth, a cover for the nascent Iraqi Branch of the Ba'th party, on the twenty-third the Communists firmly caught hold of the current and led it whither they willed. The other parties, which in mass tactics were no match at all to the Communists, completely lost influence over the street. While their leaders sat in their

headquarters or in drawing-rooms and watched events from above, Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī, the secretary of the Communist party, Muḥammad Rāḍī Shubbar, a member of the Central Committee, and Ḥaidar Ḥātem, a basic Communist organizer, determined on the spot the nature and rhythm of the movement. It was under their direct guidance that in the morning crowds, crying "We Want Bread not Bullets!" stormed the Qambar 'Alī police station. Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī was also present when at about one o'clock in the afternoon the United States Information Service library was burned. At a word from him, Communist party member Yaḥyah Ḥusain had forced open the gate of the building housing the library, and party member 'Abd-ur-Razzāq 'Abdallah had led the demonstrators in setting fire to the books and furniture. Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī was again on the scene when, later in the afternoon, insurrectionary workers occupied and burned the Bāb-ish-Shaikh police station. They had been provoked to anger by a fierce fusillade which, according to the Special Branch report of the day, brought death to twelve of their comrades. With revenge in their heart, they seized a policeman, who had had no time to escape from the station, dragged him to the street, and burned him.[9]

By sundown it became clear that the situation had gotten out of hand. The army was quickly called in, and General Nūr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd, the chief of staff, a Kurd by descent but a Turk by type, was given the mandate to form a new government. Within hours he proclaimed martial law, dissolved the opposition parties, locked up their leaders, and ordered arrests all over Baghdād. But the real power over the insurrectionary crowds, the invisible Communist party center, remained intact. On the morning of 24 November, therefore, the demonstrations, now decrying the "dictatorship of the English spy Nūr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd," began again, and did not subside until the evening, when the troops opened fire on the crowds in the plebeian quarter of Bāb-ish-Shaikh and killed eighteen and wounded eighty-four.[10]

Interestingly enough, in the demonstrations on that day there were repeated shouts for "a democratic government under Kāmil ach-Chādirchī," the leader of the National Democrats. The Communist party secretary would later explain that the slogan was of a purely "tactical" significance and should it have found flesh, would have been merely "one step forward on the road to a people's democracy."[11]

The events in Baghdād found echoes in several provincial towns, and especially in Najaf, but here no guiding initiative was felt from the party secretariat. In the November days, wrote subsequently the *mas‘ūl* of the Najaf Local Committee, “we could sense that the country was in the grip of a revolutionary crisis but we had no idea where the party stood nor were we kept informed of developments. . . . We learned from people in the streets. . . that the masses had gone into action in Baghdād . . . and we felt that our organization had to do its part.”[12]

The provinces were also affected by the wave of repression that swept Baghdād. By the end of November, in the entire country 958 persons had been thrown into jail, 2,041 temporarily detained, and 2 condemned to death. But this solution, or the other measures taken by the military government, scarcely touched–it goes without saying–the kernel of Iraq’s social maladies.

31

MORE AND MORE EXTREMISM, LESS AND LESS SENSE

From the days of November and–excepting a brief interlude–for a few years afterwards, the Iraqi Communists steered an increasingly uncompromising course. In this they were partly keeping step with Communist parties abroad, but for a time they drifted farther and on their own. The extremism of their line neither fitted the concrete correlation of forces, nor fell in with the demands of the moment and, as could be expected, bounded back damagingly on themselves.

The Communists had, in practice, been oriented leftward since their effective reentry into the life of Iraq in the autumn of 1951, but the trend now gathered in intensity and found formal expression in a new National Charter of the party.

The charter, which was circulated among members as early as December 1952, but officially adopted only in March 1953, clearly lacked the elasticity of the old 1944 party program and involved, in particular, the abandonment of Fahd's mild demand for "a genuinely democratic regime" within the existing framework of society and its substitution by the formula of "a People's Democratic Republic representing the will of the workers, peasants, and popular masses."[1] This was the essential point of the charter. It was also its most extreme and most unreal element, but at the same time an ideologically necessary adaptation to the international Communist line.[2] Other points were more consonant with contemporary popular feelings and included the "annulment of imperialist treaties . . . and of concessions granted to imperialist companies,"[3] and "the confiscation of the estates of the feudalists and big proprietors and their distribution with all *mīrī* lands[4] in small plots to the peasants without charge."[5] The charter also bound the party to "unconditional cooperation with the forces of peace . . . led by the Soviet Union."[6]

The publication in December of the draft of the charter provoked a heated party debate, and brought to full development differences that had in the past existed in germ. Eventually, the ranks sundered: in February 1953 seventy-three Communists, belonging for the most part to the Arbīl and Sulaimāniyyah organizations and identifying themselves as "the disciples of Fahd" or "the comrades devoted to the teachings of Fahd," but dubbed by the Central Committee as "right deviationists" and "agents of the Palace," were expelled or seceded from the party.[7] In no long time they put out a paper of their own, *Rāyat-ush-Shaghghīlah* ("The Banner of the Workers") and launched into an implacable criticism of the party leadership. They accused it of exaggerating the weight of "the revolutionary forces," belittling the role of "the liberal bourgeoisie," and attempting to skip "the stage of national liberation." There were no objective grounds, they declared, for a change in the strategy of the party or the adoption of a new program. To the "sonorous and empty" slogan of "a People's Democratic Republic" they opposed the "pertinent" watchword of "a national, democratic, and peace-loving government."[8]

The moving spirit of the new faction was Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī, a scion of a well-known landowning Kurdish family of Arbīl, and the nephew of ʻĀṣim al-Ḥaidarī, an ex-minister of the *awqāf*.[9] He was in some degree an old-timer, having joined the party in late 1945, but had earlier belonged to the anti-Fahd Waḥdat-un-Niḍāl and to the factious *Shursh*. As he now unashamedly claimed to have been "in the confidence of Comrade Fahd," the party command did not tarry in raking up these discreditable passages of his revolutionary career.[10]

The group of al-Ḥaidarī was not alone in challenging the authority of the leadership in the underground. Another rival organization, drawn from the remnants of the People's party and consisting basically of members of the intelligentsia, could be noticed at this time. It had been active intermittently since June 1949, and at one point called itself "The Committee for the Spreading of Marxist Consciousness," but from 1952 onward went under the name of "The Party for the Unity of the Communists in Iraq," although it tended to be more of a disruptive than an integrating force. Its chief threads were in the hands of ʻAbd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf, an Arab Sunnī lawyer from ʻAnāh, and the brother of ʻAzīz Sharīf, ex-leader of the People's party. In its mouthpiece, *An-Niḍāl* ("The Struggle"), it cast doubt on the

“legitimacy” of the Central Committee of the Communist party and called for the election, by a duly constituted Communist congress, of a genuinely representative leadership.[11]

Close after the split in ranks came an event which had not been in any one’s reckoning, and which led eventually and, as it were, fortuitously, to a marked exaggeration of the trend toward left extremism. On 13 April 1953, Bahā’u-d-Dīn Nūrī, the secretary of the Central Committee, fell into the hands of the police.[12] Authority in the party passed to ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd, a Kurdish ex-schoolmaster from Arbīl (see Table 31-1).

Ad-Dāūd was, in the secretariat, definitely out of place. He had only a smattering of Marxism and was, in a political sense, still undeveloped. The ideas or, more accurately, the formulations, for which he was immediately responsible revealed a man of somewhat muddled intellect.[13] His seconding in late June by Salīm ach-Chalabī–an ex-postal employee from a prominent Shī‘ī and mercantile family of al-Kāḍhimiyyah,[14] and a Communist from Fahd’s days who escaped from prison in that month–scarcely helped, for, whether in regard to his understanding of the theory or his exercise of the craft of revolution, ach-Chalabī was pretty much cut out of the same cloth.

TABLE 31-1

Central Committees of the Communist Party (April 1953 to June 1955)

Name	Nation and religion	Date and place of birth	Profession	Education
Committee from April 1953 to 16 June 1954				
'Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd (secretary)[a]	Kurd, Sunnī	1922, Arbīl	Ex-schoolteacher	Elementary Teachers' College
Nāṣir 'Abbūd[b]	(See Table 29-1)			
'Abdallah 'Umar Muḥyī-d-Dīn	(See Table 29-1)			
Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī	Arab, Shī'ī	1924, Najaf	Ex-schoolteacher	Elementary Teachers' College
Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-'Aballī	Arab, Sunnī	1927, Baghdād	Ex-bookstore keeper	Two years at Law School
Salīm 'Abd-ul-Ghanī ach-Chalabī[a,c]	Arab, Shī'ī	1910, Kāḍhimiyyah	Ex-postal employee	Secondary
Ṣādiq Ja'far al-Falāḥī[c]	(See Table 29-1)			
Committee from 16 June 1954 to June 1955				
Ḥamīd 'Uthmān (secretary)	(See Table 23-1)			
'Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd	(See above)			
Salīm 'Abd-ul-Ghanī ach-Chalabī[d]	(See above)			
Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-'Aballī	(See above)			
George Ḥannā Tallū	Arabized Chaldean, Christian	1922, Baghdād	Ex-railway employee	Engineering School; imprisoned before completing course
Farḥān Tu'mah	Arab, Shī'ī	1927, Kāḍhimiyyah	Ex-grocer	Intermediate
'Abd 'Alwān aṭ-Ṭā'ī	Arab, Shī'ī	1922, 'Amārah	Ex-schoolteacher	Elementary Teachers' College
Nāṣir 'Abbūd[e]	(See Table 29-1)			
Hādī Hāshim al-A'ḍhamī[e]	Arab, Sunnī	1926, al-A'ḍhamiyyah	Ex-student	Secondary
'Āmer 'Abdallah[e]	Arab, Sunnī	1924, 'Ānah	Lawyer	Law School

[a]From July 1953 to June 1954 Salīm ach-Chalabī seconded ad-Dāūd in the secretariat.

[b]Arrested February 21, 1954.

[c]Ach-Chalabī and al-Falāḥī became members of the Central Committee after their escape from the prison of Kūt in June 1953.

Class origin	Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement	Subsequent history
Lower middle class	1945 (23)	Arrested October 1955; member Central Committee 1958-1963 and 1964 to date
From a family of *sayyids* of lower middle income; son of a petty clerk at a flour mill	1943 (19)	First party secretary 1955-1963; died under torture, 1963
Peasant class; son of a small farmer	1945 (18)	Member Central Committee 1955-1963; attended 22nd Congress of C.P.S.U.; killed 1963
Upper middle class; impoverished son of wealthy merchant and landowner	1943 (33)	Expelled from party 1955
Lower middle class; son of a railway employee	1941 (19)	Member Central Committee 1955-1963; killed 1963
Lower middle class; son of a shopkeeper	1948 (21)	Member Central Committee 1955-1958; arrested and defected January 1958
Peasant class; son of a peasant	1945 (23)	Left party in mid-fifties
Lower middle class; son of a petty government official	1945 (19)	Member Politbureau 1958-1963; revealed party secrets after Ba'thi investigators broke his back
From a family of *sayyids* of lower middle income; son of a *mu'azzin*[f] and shopkeeper	1951 (27)[g]	Member Politbureau 1956-1961; married Bulgarian Anna Nkova, 1959; in East Europe 1961-1964; member Central Committee 1964 to date; minister of state (1972 to date)

[d]Left in early 1955 to Czechoslovakia for medical treatment; subsequently expelled from party.
[e]Co-opted early 1955, 'Abbūd and al-A'ḍhamī after their escape from prison.
[f]Caller to prayer.
[g]Formerly member of People's party.

Ad-Dāūd's rise to first place clearly derived from the solid support he received from Hamīd 'Uthmān,[15] an ex-petition writer from Bīr Dāūd, a village in the province of Arbīl, a veteran Communist with many

sympathizers in the Kurdish Branch and among the extremists in the prisons, and the leader of the party organization in the Kūt jail. ‘Uthmān had now–it only followed–as much say in the party as communications between the jail and the underground permitted. It would even appear that the new secretariat had seldom any will that was not the echo of his own. At any rate, the ideas which it circulated–“a People’s Revolution,” “a People’s Republic,” “the capture of power by the proletariat” as “an immediate task . . . ”[16] bespoke the exaggerated extremism with which he was reputedly associated.[17]

However, in the late summer or early autumn of 1953, with the apparent softening of the left line of Communist parties in neighboring lands,[18] a moderate group led by Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī, an ex-schoolteacher from Najaf and the future first secretary of the party,[19] succeeded–as can be inferred from subsequent events–in persuading the Central Committee to temper its zeal. On 2 September new instructions were issued requiring the party to devote its efforts in the immediate situation to the bringing about of “a national democratic government which would serve peace and realize the demands of the people.”[20] Due to discordant opinions and an insufficient political consciousness, this change in course was not, however, carried through to its practical conclusions until May 1954. Moreover, hardly a month after that–on June 16, to be precise–Ḥamīd ‘Uthmān[21] broke jail, assumed command, charged Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī with “right deviationism,” ousted him from the Central Committee, and eventually brought the party back onto a left extremist path.[22]

‘Uthmān was certainly brighter than ad-Dāūd, his predecessor, but he was also more impulsive and, at any rate, scarcely more fitted for the foremost role in the party. In everything he did or said, he showed much enthusiasm but little sound judgment. More than that, the ends upon which he fastened were far from realizable and wholly out of accord with the means in hand or the policy of other Arab Communist parties. Elsewhere his line of conduct is discussed in its proper objective context. Here it may be mentioned briefly that he recurrently threw the Communist party into costly and senseless encounters with the police.[23] On one occasion–in September 1954–he raised the slogan of “a general political strike,”[24] on another–in January 1955–that of “armed struggle.” He also pressed for the building of “a people’s revolutionary army” and the covering of the

countryside with “revolutionary strongholds.”[25] It is beyond doubt that he was in this period under the influence of the ideas of Mao Tse-tung. He himself emphasized more than once the relevance of the Chinese Communist experience.[26]

Not all the members of the Central Committee stood solidly behind ‘Uthmān. Some of them did not hesitate to tax him with squandering the party’s forces and frustrating its real aims. But ‘Uthmān would continue to have his way until June 1955, when the futility of his tactics would become all too evident and he would be abruptly thrust aside.[27]

In this chapter we have described the extremist policy which the Communists pursued without setting it against the weighty facts of the day, but these must now be brought in to show how inappropriate the policy was, particularly in regard to what it necessarily implied for the relations between the Communists and other opposition parties; and how, therefore, defeat was its logical and inescapable consummation.

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A DEFEAT FOR THE PARTY, OR THE BIRTH OF THE BAGHDĀD PACT

The foremost Western powers had, as early as 1950, begun to devise ways of involving a distrustful Arab East in military arrangements answering to their interests, and which they at one time euphemistically described as the "Middle East Defence Organization." Whatever their stated or unstated motives–and the motives proper to each power obviously differed, their circumstances not being identical–it was popularly believed that what they truly aspired at was nothing else than to keep the area with its bases, communications, and oil wealth under their thumb and, in general, implicate it in their conflict with the Soviet Union. Anyhow, they were initially unable to make the slightest progress. Their very first formal try–the hurried attempt in October 1951 to preserve old British positions by merely substituting for the existing unequal bilateral treaties (the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of 1936 and Anglo-Iraqi Treaty of 1930) an unequal multilateral pact embracing, among others, Britain, the United States, and the principal Arab countries–ran immediately aground. More serious were the endeavors made later and out of which grew that well-known sequence of agreements–the treaty of "friendship and cooperation for security" between Turkey and Pakistan of April 2, 1954; the "military assistance" understanding between Iraq and the United States of April 21, 1954; the Turkish-Iraqi "mutual cooperation" pact of February 24, 1955; the Special Agreement between Iraq and Britain of April 4, 1955, and so on–which crystallized into the political-military bloc ultimately designated as the Baghdād Pact.

The opposition in Iraq was not caught unawares, but the resistance it put up was remarkably feeble when compared to the fierce and implacable agitation with which it met the Portsmouth Treaty seven years earlier. And

yet, from its point of view, the Baghdād Pact was but another Portsmouth Treaty and worse. The pact not only perpetuated the undesired connection with the English and guaranteed them the privileges they had hitherto enjoyed, but also entailed a severing of Arab ranks and an open taking of sides in the "cold war." It alienated, in other words, neutralist, nationalist, and pan-Arab opinion. It was also, of course, a direct challenge to the Iraqi Communist party. But the reaction it evoked was not even faintly suggestive of what happened in 1948. How is this to be accounted for?

It might be tempting to say at once that this time Nūrī as-Sa'īd took better precautions. This he undeniably did. As a rule, true to his old Ottoman upbringing, he preferred to pull the strings from behind the scenes, but on 2 August 1954, that is, more than six months before the conclusion of the pact with Turkey, he openly came on stage. A few weeks later–on 22 August–he decreed the denationalization and banishment of Iraqis "convicted" of communism, but on 1 September restricted the disadvantage to hardened and unrepenting members of the party.[1] By virtue of a series of further decrees–Decrees No. 18, 19, 24, and 25 of 1954[2]–he abruptly canceled the skinny freedoms that had been restored in October 1953 close after the abolition of martial law. Parties, unions, and clubs were suppressed, public meetings restricted, and opposition papers silenced. This would enable the American ambassador to Iraq to remark later that "editorial comment in the Baghdād press on the proposed Turkish-Iraqi agreement was uniformly favorable."[3]

But Nūrī's decrees or his heavy hand would not have forestalled a mass protest movement, had grounds for it existed in the real life-relations of the people, as in 1948. Then the poor of Baghdād were hungry, desperate, and saturated with insurrectionary feelings. By 1954 they had sunk into an inactive mood, and could not easily be brought to their feet. The official price of food index stood now at a low of 549 points (1939 = 100) and in 1955 would rise only to 573, compared to the peak of 805 in 1948.[4] The earnings of labor had also relatively improved.[5] Moreover, in the mid-fifties the country disposed of ample oil revenues. A narrow class of moneyed people, it is true, benefited unevenly and conspicuously from the new wealth.[6] On the other hand, the heightened tempo of the economy and the development projects, initiated by the government, cut tangibly into the

heavy unemployment that characterized Iraqi towns in the days of the *Wathbah* and the *Intifāḍah*.

However, although the conditions of the masses were no longer intolerable, privations were still very widespread, and expectations had noticeably risen so that an agitational effort skillfully deployed and of sufficient scale could have gone far. But the Communists were not capable in 1954-1955 of mounting such an effort single-handedly. For one thing, in consequence of repeated police blows and a split in the ranks, they were now at roughly one-eighth their strength in 1948. Qualitatively, their condition left also a great deal to be desired, and scarcely bore comparison with the standard attained under Fahd. This made it all the more necessary for them to join forces with the other elements of the opposition, particularly in such a battle as that of the Baghdād Pact in which, as one Communist paper put it, real danger threatened "directly" and "at the very core" "the international proletarian cause . . . and the interests of the working class and popular masses."[7]

But to attract to a front elements of varied colorings demanded correct attitudes, a high order of suppleness, and an ability to overcome the natural prejudices of good "bourgeois" politicians against casting in their lots with the Communists. The front had also to be prepared for and nourished long enough in advance to prevent successfully any attempt by Nūrī as-Sa'īd to paralyze it. But the ideological orientation of the Communists and the low political level of their leadership stood in their way.

In late 1950, when it first became known that the Western powers were exploring possibilities for towing the Arab East more securely to their camp, the National Democrats took up at once an opposing attitude,[8] and not long after raised the banner of "neutralism."[9] Subsequently, in the spring of 1951, two other non-Communist forces, the Popular Front and the Independence party arrived at the same position. The Communists greeted them only with scorn, dismissing the neutralist idea as unreal. The choice for Iraq, they affirmed, lay between "the camp of peace, liberation, and democracy . . . and the camp of war, imperialism, and reaction . . . ; no third camp exists."[10] Later, in October 1952, while linking neutralism to "opportunist" practical conclusions, they discriminated between its proponents. The guiding nucleus of the Independence party consisted of irremediable "fascists," and at heart sympathized with the other camp. The

neutralism of the Popular Front was also a smokescreen, its central figures being “open hirelings” or “hirelings-in-reserve” of the imperialists. The National Democratic leaders, issuing from the “liberal bourgeoisie,” stood in a class apart. “For the present,” they genuinely resisted the roping of Iraq to imperialism, but their “bourgeois nature” and their “fear of revolutionary movements” impelled them also into an attitude of aloofness toward the “camp of the peoples” led by the Soviet Union.[11] The Communists had, nonetheless, to win them and the rank-and-file members of the other organizations of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, including the “deceived elements” in the ranks of the Independence party, to a “tactical” anti-imperialist front, basically anchored on the workers and peasants. The helm was not to be surrendered under any circumstances into the hands of the bourgeoisie, the latter being inclined “by reason of its class interests, unstable ideology, and special methods of struggle . . . to compromise with the imperialists at the most acute moments.”[12]

On the eve of the *Intifāḍah*, in November 1952, the Communists softened their attitude and allowed the Peace Partisans to enter into an understanding with all three of the “neutralist” parties.[13] But their overforceful tactics during the uprising and the ease with which they moved into the center of things, crowding the others out and supplanting them in the leadership of the crowds, created alarm and added to the distrust which the rest of the opposition already entertained.

After the collapse of the *Intifāḍah* and the imposition of martial law, the Communists lashed at the “sham” opposition of the Popular Front and the Independence party, reproved the National Democrats for their “oscillation between the people and the treacherous bureaucratic rulers,” and declaratorily fixed their hopes on a “popular patriotic front” composed of “the genuine opponents of imperialism” and resting essentially on “the proletarian workers,” “the poor peasants,” and “the revolutionary strata of the petty bourgeoisie (the students, intellectuals, craftsmen, little traders, etc.).”[14]

In January 1953, Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, the leader of the National Democrats, tried to talk the Communists into altering their tactics. “There are indications,” he confided to a representative of the Communist party,

> that the competent quarters intend to carry to a decision the project for the “Defence of the Middle East.” They will act in the light of international developments and when the government will feel sure of its strength. . . . Only external action–i.e., the going of the masses into the streets–could then defeat the project. This is why the government will cling to martial law. Of course, by the government I do not mean the wealthy politicians, who have no organized plan of their own, but Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, who is in constant touch with the English and knows well the nature of the schemes that are to be put into effect and who reckons on martial law to wipe out the progressives . . . and settle with the opposition.

Attacks by the Communists on the Independence party, added Chādirchī–and he said he was singling out this party because the Popular Front had really bitten the dust–were in the circumstances ill-advised. All the forces of the opposition had to obey the logic of the situation and stand shoulder to shoulder.[15]

But the advice of Chādirchī was not accepted. The Communists did not think that the Independence party was deserving of confidence. More than that, before long the class which, in the Communist view, Chādirchī’s party incarnated, came itself under fire.[16] “The liberal national bourgeoisie,” an inner Communist journal put it pointedly in June 1953, “now fears the people’s revolution more than the feudal-imperialist dominance and has, therefore, become a class hostile to the revolutionary aims and interests of the people.”[17] With such a flourish of ultraleftist phraseology, the Communist leadership covered up the in-appropriateness of its political course.

This ultraleftism was not, to be sure, an inference from Iraqi facts or from the living problems that the party confronted. The leadership cited in justification the speech of J. V. Stalin at the nineteenth congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union, held in Moscow in October 1952.[18] “The bourgeoisie, the principal enemy of the liberation movement,” Stalin affirmed on that occasion, “has sensibly changed, has become more reactionary, has lost its links with the people . . . . At present it sells national rights ... for dollars. ... It is now undoubtedly up to you, the representatives of the Communist and democratic parties, to lift the banner [of national

independence and national sovereignty] and carry it forward. . . . There is nobody else to lift it."[19]

The antibourgeois note in the Soviet view of the dependent countries dated from 1947, that is, roughly from the time when the "cold war" began to take definite shape, and pervaded Soviet writings down to 1953.[20] These writings provided also a clear theoretic sanction for an anti-neutralist attitude.[21]

The same unambiguous antibourgeois and antineutralist thread ran through the contemporary statements of the Syrian Communist party secretary Khālid Bakdāsh. His first attack on neutralism came in an inner brochure, published in February 1948, and was unequivocal and unqualified:

> The division of the world into two camps . . . which our two Central Committees[22] were late in noticing . . . and on which the conference of the nine European Communist parties, held in Warsaw last September, shed light . . . utterly controverts–as is continually demonstrated by events–the existence of a "third" or "intermediate" or "neutral" camp. But the ruling circles of Syria and Lebanon . . . still babble about "neutralism" . . . and the imaginary "third force," seeking by this maneuver to cover up their assiduous progress toward closer understanding with foreign imperialism.[23]

Bakdāsh was no less categorical in condemning the neutralism of the Syrian and Lebanese opposition. In a report to the plenary session of the Central Committee in January 1951, he called for the "exposure" of parties that "claim to be socialist such as the Arab Socialist party, the Muslim Socialist Front, the Ba'th party in Syria, and the Socialist Progressive party of Jumblāt in the Lebanon," and that, among other things,

> strive to preclude the increase of popular sympathy for the world camp of peace and socialism and its vanguard, the Soviet Union, by propagandizing for . . . a so-called "neutralism"–which, in practice, leads to a breaking up of the mounting wave of hatred and struggle against war and the aggressive plans of the Anglo-American imperialists.[24]

The antibourgeois tendency of the Syrian Communist party went hand in hand with its antineutralism,[25] and found its climactic expression in the 1951 report just cited.[26] Bakdāsh made, however, a qualification. “Some elements of the national bourgeoisie,” he said, “may lend support to the revolutionary movement . . . under certain conditions and in a provisional and limited manner.”[27]

Wherever applied–in Syria, Iraq, or elsewhere in the Arab East–these views, which, in practice, involved an attitude of opposition to groups and parties of every coloring other than their own, naturally left the Communists little scope for political maneuver. By the autumn of 1953, it had become amply evident to them that to continue to stand by the current formulas could only help rather than hinder Western plans. The death of Stalin in that year which, in general, made for a greater degree of flexibility in Soviet ideas and behavior, must have smoothed the way for a change. Insofar as the Arab East was concerned, Khālid Bakdāsh was the first to draw, or perhaps more accurately to spell out, the necessary inferences. “We Arabs,” he declared in November 1953 in the journal of the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers’ Parties, “have but one path, the path of a broad [anti-imperialist] national front which must unite the workers, peasants, middle strata of the urban population, and large sections of the national bourgeoisie.”[28] Bakdāsh, in other words, broke with the antibourgeois formula. At the same time he let fall silently the twin slogan of antineutralism. By February 14, 1954, he was calling for a “comprehensive national front” inscribing on its banners the demand for a “national democratic government” and uniting “the workers, peasants, all the producers; the men of the national economy be they industrialists, merchants, or farmers; the intellectuals, students, and women–a front to which the mass of the soldiery and all honest national officers would assuredly extend their hand.”[29] In May he pledged his solidest support in the then approaching Syrian elections to “every national democratic candidate whatever his party, group, orientation, or social status . . . provided he resists imperialism and its war projects . . . and works for democratic freedoms.”[30] “We have never sworn to stand to the left of all people,” he added in August.[31]

Bakdāsh's change of policy paid good dividends. In September he was elected to the Chamber of Deputies, and in due course his party helped to no little degree in defeating plans for the extension to Syria of the proposed Baghdād Pact. Undoubtedly Syrian political conditions greatly eased the tasks of Bakdash: on 25 February 1954 the dictatorship of the military that had weighed on the Syrian people since March 1949 gave way to a tolerably open regime, and a year later a neutralist left, tending toward the Communists, conquered the political initiative.

In Iraq, the objective situation was in 1954-1955, if anything, unfavorable to the Communist party. This has been already noted. However, by its own conduct the party made things only worse for itself. It did, it is true, in September 1953–that is, about one month before the abolition of martial law and the restoration of relative liberty for non-Communist opposition parties–shelve the implicitly antibourgeois watchword of a "People's Democratic Republic" and replace it by that of a "National Democratic Government."[32] But due to inexperience, a hazy ideological state, and a want of harmony in its higher echelons, the party remained in the ensuing crucial months in a half-way position. As late as April 1954 it still thought in terms of a united front oriented "principally" toward the workers and peasants and "for limited purposes" toward the National Democrats and the rank and file, but not the leading layer of the Independence party.[33] It was only after the signing of the Military Assistance Understanding between Iraq and the United States on 21 April, and after a lively election campaign–the freest in the history of the monarchy–had set in, that the party carried the change in its line through to the end. On May 8 it adjured in a special appeal "all national parties and organizations, . . . the Peace Partisans, and independent democratic personalities" to contest the elections in unison and on a program specifically committing them "to reject war plans and American assistance and work for the evacuation of imperialist troops and the unleashing of democratic freedoms. . . ."[34] The National Democrats and the Independence party responded, but very guardedly. They agreed on 12 May to enter into a "National Front" with "democratic organizations representing wide strata of the people," that is, with the auxiliary forces of the Communist party, the Peace Partisans, among others. They also agreed to a charter for the front incorporating the items just cited, which, in any case, fell in with their own

aims.[35] But, as the Communist party subsequently complained, they apportioned seats on the National Front Committee in an "undemocratic" manner, refused "to allow the Communist party to participate in any of its activities," conducted all affairs at their own discretion and "in isolation of the masses and without their supervision or the supervision of the co-founding organizations." They also would not lend the prestige of the front to any demonstration or other "affirmative action of the people." Moreover, after "a number" of their candidates had been elected–thanks, in part, to Communist or pro-Communist votes–they served notice that there was no further need for the front and that opposition inside parliament would suffice, although the other organizations had no representatives in the *majlis*.[36] Obviously, the leaders of the National Democrats and of the Independence party were, to an extent, acting their natural "bourgeois" selves, so to say, but the Communist party was also, in a sense, making payment for the high-handedness and over-confidence of its past behavior.

If the National Front disappointed the Communists, it made an impression on the government. Despite "considerable undisguised pressure by local officials"[37] and the usual juggleries of the elective method, the front won in the June 9 elections eleven seats in a *majlis* of 135.[38] The significant thing about the results was not so much that the front acquired a new forum for airing its grievances, but that it had made concentrated gains in sensitive areas: it captured four out of the ten constituencies of Baghdād and four out of Mosul's nine. These were sufficiently good grounds for "the consternation of the Palace and conservative elements."[39] Even the imperturbable Nūrī as-Sa'īd was "very much impressed by the superior organization and discipline" of the Front.[40] It is a mystery why the powers that be decided to risk semifree elections at this juncture. They had, it is true, developed the habit of alternately loosening and tightening the reins, but from their own standpoint this could scarcely have seemed the time for tolerance. Probably they only wanted to test the strength of the opposition. Possibly the undiscerning 'Abd-ul-Ilāh approved the idea merely because Nūrī as-Sa'īd, whom he hated, disapproved of it. At any rate, the new parliament was never allowed to do anything. It met only once on 26 July 1954, in a brief inaugural session, and was unceremoniously dissolved on 3 August, the second day after Nūrī as-Sa'īd took office.

The policy of unsparing repression, described elsewhere, went now into effect. The Communist party alone reacted, and rashly. Back in June a devil-may-care secretary had taken charge.[41] He decided at this point to give battle when it would have been prudent to decline it. He repeatedly ordered his followers into the streets of Baghdād, enjoining them to erect barricades and burn police posts.[42] Such tactics scarcely corresponded to the means of the party and, considering the impassiveness of the mass of Baghdādis, were foredoomed to failure. According to the then American ambassador to Iraq, the "daily clashes between the police and Communists" that ensued "so disrupted the Communist party that in less than a year it became impossible for it to carry on a coordinated campaign against the government."[43]

By mid-January 1955, after the visit to Baghdād of Adnan Menderes, the prime minister of Turkey, and about one month before the conclusion of the Iraqi-Turkish Pact, the party had well convinced itself that it could not, unaided, make any dent on Nūrī as-Sa'īd. It therefore sent its "compliments to all the brothers in the oppressed National Democratic party, to all lovers of their country in the Independence party, the Ba'th, and among the Kurdish Democrats, and to the loyal men of religion and honest liberal politicians," and, after reminding them that alignment with Turkey meant "alignment in the wheel of war policy . . . and the tearing of the unity of the Arab world," meaningfully added:

> We confess that, due to political inexperience, stiff and wrong attitudes were taken by us in the past, especially in the matter of relations between parties. However, in the most critical periods we have not closed our eyes to our national duties. We expect that our brothers will also realize their mistakes from which only the imperialists and reactionaries have benefited.

The party finally appealed for "the closing and bolstering of ranks," and made assurance that "the simplest joint action will throw the government Nūrī as-Sa'īd out of power."[44]

But it was too late. The party leadership had been too slow in digesting the facts of the day, if it had digested them at all. The other forces of the opposition were in a state of paralysis. Besides, if this appeal was meant to

win their good-will, the actual tactics that the party pursued and the slogans of “armed struggle” and of “a people’s revolution” in the countryside, that it raised a fortnight later,[45] could only have frightened them away.

The government won: the Baghdād Pact was concluded. But the government had, of course, won only a round, for the people of Iraq had not yet said their final word.

33

A BIT OF FORGOTTEN HISTORY, OR THE TRAGIC OCCURRENCES AT THE BAGHDĀD AND KŪT PRISONS

In the last decade of the monarchy, as in the first decade of the republic, common criminals were more humanely treated in the prisons than political offenders. More often than not, abuse, torture, ruin of health awaited the Iraqis who took the wrong side politically. The public was predisposed to expect even worse things from Iraq's jailkeepers and political police. But in 1953 two incidents occurred in the prisons which shocked the country and had powerful reverberations.

At the time, there were altogether about 312 Communists behind bars, 164 in the Baghdād Central Jail,[1] 123 in Kūt prison,[2] and 25 in Nuqrat as-Salmān,[3] a fortress in the midst of the Southern Desert.[4] In earlier years most of these prisoners were lodged in the remote and forbidding Nuqrat as-Salmān, but a ten-day hunger strike in July 1951 and tumultuous demonstrations by their relatives persuaded the authorities to transfer them to nearer and healthier jails. In more critical periods, as in the months after the *Wathbah* of 1948 or the *Intifāḍah* of 1952, the number of prisoners had been greater, but the less hardened had subsequently been released. Some had also succeeded in making their escape. On the morning of 11 February 1952, for example, the guards at the prison of Kūt discovered that the Communists had hollowed out a subterranean passage 13 meters long and 1½ meters deep, and that fourteen of them had gotten away during the night.[5] Seven were, however, immediately tracked and recaptured, and on 13 February conveyed to Nuqrat as-Salmān. How the prisoners were able to secure the requisite tools or where they hid the mass of earth that they dug up remained unsolved puzzles. The prison superintendent thought that a number of the warders on sentry duty must have been in sympathy with them. Later, in March and again in June 1953, there were more get-aways

from the same prison and the escapees were not missed until roll call.[6] But such happenings were as nothing to the incidents which must now be described and which were utterly unheard of and without parallel in Iraqi prison history.

The time was June of 1953. For months past there had been an undercurrent of restlessness among the Communists in the Baghdād citadel. They had been moved to bitter feelings by prolonged imprisonment and a hard and ruthless jailor–one ʻAbd-uj-Jabbār Ayyūb, who afterwards did not conceal from this writer that if it were left to him he would have summarily finished them all off.[7] Things swelled to a climactic point on 18 June. That day Ayyūb unexpectedly announced to the prisoners that they were to be transferred to another jail. Special buildings had been prepared for them at Baʻqūbah, fifty-five kilometers to the northeast, as the Baghdād citadel was found to offer too many opportunities for clandestine communication with the underground. Left in ignorance as to their real destination, and conceiving themselves about to be sent to Nuqrat as-Salmān, the prisoners refused to move and, according to the chief of police of Baghdād province, shut themselves in the wards, turning into a weapon everything they could lay their hands on–bottles, water pipes, kitchen utensils, and bricks that they plucked up from the corridors. Detachments of mobile and local police rushed to the scene and took up positions on roof tops, in the prison yard, and the adjacent streets. They began by using tear gas in the hope of forcing the Communists out, but to no avail. Streams of water were next directed at the wards from a fire-fighting engine, but the Communists answered only with antigovernment cries that now rang sharply and persistently through the prison. Eventually, however, under the pressure of water and the battering of the police and the wardens, the gate gave way. A shower of bricks and bottles held the assailants in check, but only momentarily. Reinforced, they hurled forward, cutting their way with clubs or the butts of rifles. But, on the official version, the resistance that they met was so furious that they had in the end to open fire. Seven prisoners were killed, including Ismāʻīl Aḥmad, a candidate member of the Central Committee in the time of Fahd, and Hādī ʻAbd-ur-Riḍā, a liaison official of the Communist party center in 1948. Eighty-one others were wounded, one of whom subsequently died in hospital. Seventy-four policemen and warders suffered injuries.[8]

Before a month was past, things began to happen in another prison, that of Kūt, which were to lead to an incident no less ghastly. On July 5, 1953, the 123 Communists lodged there addressed a petition to the authorities in which they complained that the food was meager and inedible, and protested, in fierce and bitter language, against the torture inflicted upon Bahā‘u-d-Dīn Nūrī, the secretary of the party, and three of his companions. On July 27 a special tribunal came to Kūt from Baghdād with instructions to deal with the petitioners upon the count of abusing and defaming the government. But the prisoners refused to take their trial and secured themselves inside the wards. In the following days they ignored roll calls, prevented searches by the guard, and by means of crude devices, called *ma‘ājīl*, tossed “inflammatory” leaflets into the neighboring streets. On the morning of 2 August, the bewildered inhabitants of Kūt heard sharp cries from the direction of the prison. Above the general din resounded insistent appeals carried by an improvised trumpet: “People of Kūt! We have been deprived of food . . . ! Our lives are in danger! The traitors are set on murdering us all!” Despite a statement by the prison superintendent that the Communists had themselves declined to receive their rations, violent demonstrations gripped the town on 4 August, and units of the mobile police had to be called in. Ten days later, two prisoners fell dead after a sudden discharge of firearms. According to the police, an assault by the Communists on warders carrying provisions provoked the incident. According to the Communists, who immediately trumpeted their losses to the public, the police had tried to storm the prison but failed. But the worst was yet to come. On 2 September, the stored-away foodstuffs which the prisoners had received from relatives prior to the “siege” ran out. Exhaustion and fainting fits now disposed them to allow the search desired by the authorities. The search, carried out forthwith, was meticulous and complete. It began at 3:30 in the afternoon and ended at 4:45 of the following morning. Manuscripts, leaflets, sharp instruments, and appliances of all sorts were confiscated. Everything went smoothly up to that point, but when next the prison superintendent demanded that fifteen Jewish Communists be promptly delivered to him, the prisoners reverted to their defiant attitude. The superintendent instantly informed his superiors and then reiterated his demand but, realizing that the prisoners were firmly determined, asked the chief of the police to do his “duty.” What happened

now differed from what happened at the Baghdād citadel in only a number of particulars. For one thing, the prisoners were in this instance virtually weaponless. For another, the police did not restrict itself this time to pistol or rifle fire, but put a machine gun into action. And then there was the cutting off of the electric current during the short, sharp fight, which caused no little confusion. The Communists claim that moments before the fusillade the authorities opened all the sluices of the Kūt barrage so that the roar of the water would drown the sound of gunfire. Be that as it may, when the firing ceased, 8 prisoners had been killed and 94 wounded out of the total of 121. Twelve policemen and 16 warders sustained bruises.[9]

The news of the Kūt incident, following upon that of the Baghdād citadel, produced something of a general outcry of indignation. The government itself seemed excessively annoyed at the flagrant disregard of human lives by the police. Sober-minded people wondered what world the representatives of law and order were living in. The opposition questioned whether there was not here some premeditated plan for the expeditious elimination of the prisoners.[10] The Communists, it goes without saying, gained credit from both incidents. Even the leaders of the rightist Independence party found it impossible to withhold a certain sympathy from them.

34

A DEBATE ON RELIGION

In the unsettled years after the *Wathbah* of 1948 and the *Intifāḍah* of 1952, the classes in authority tried to avail themselves of religion to keep the people in hand and stem the advance of communism. Significantly enough, the initiative in this regard came from the representatives of English power. "Communism," wrote P. B. Ray, an intelligence officer, in a letter to the director of Iraq's secret police dated April 20, 1949, "will never be completely eradicated by what we may term "police methods" alone. ... The security forces can do little of their own volition to prevent communism other than to watch for signs of its growth and then apply corrective action." Among the "corrective" methods recommended by Ray was what he called "the religious approach." "Communism," he elaborated, "is fundamentally anti-religious. . . . Although in Iraq it seems clear that the Communists have been at pains not to raise the problem of religion, it would seem that this matter could be made use of against them by the government."[1] It was apparently in the pursuit of this line that later–on October 6, 1953–Sir John Troutbeck, the English ambassador to Iraq, made direct contact with the chief Shī'ī *mujtahid*, Shaikh Muḥammad al-Ḥusain Kāshif-ul-Ghaṭā'. He visited the shaikh at his school in Najaf and discussed with him, as the shaikh subsequently put it, the matter of "the common enemy" whose "dark propaganda has–unassisted by logic or proof and without the benefit of funds or patronage or dignity of rank–spread so widely that numerous cells, embracing spirited and ardent young men, thrive today in its name in this very city which is a center of Islam and holiness."[2] In the course of the conversation the ambassador is said to have taken trouble to impress upon the shaikh that "the combating of communism is dependent upon the awakening of the *'ulamā'* and the spiritual leaders, . . . the warning of the young against these principles that

upset the conditions of the world . . . and their proper guidance in the schools and the clubs."[3]

The Communists were not unaware of the attempts to mobilize the religious forces against them, and studiously avoided giving the slightest offense to the convictions of the people. Indeed, since 1929, that is, since the demise of al-Lādīnī party, they had completely kept away from the issue of religion. However, in 1954 in the reclusion of the Ba'qūbah prison, where then lodged a goodly portion of the hard core of the Communist cadre, there took place a debate which is relevant and unique, and to which justice can be done only by lengthy quotations.

The debate–it must first be explained–revolved around the specific question of "al-Arb'īniyyāt al-Ḥusainiyyah," literally, the Ḥusaini Fortieth Days, that is, the ceremonial processions in memory of the return of the head of Ḥusain, the grandson of the Prophet, on the fortieth day after his death–20 Ṣafar. In the ceremonies, which always attract a vast concourse of pilgrims, parties from the principal towns vie with each other in representing the tragic occurrence, and hundreds of believers chastise their bodies with chains and swords in atonement for the suffering that Ḥusain endured.

The debate appears to have been set off by some incidental remarks on the "Arb'īniyyāt" in an article in the clandestine prison paper *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, ("The Struggle of the Revolutionary Prisoner") of February 2, 1954. "Oftentimes," wrote the author of the article,

> freethinkers and honest revolutionaries give expression to feudalist concepts . . . without realizing it. This happens because the threads of feudal thought and culture extend way back in time . . . and penetrate into every area of life. . . . Nowadays you still can come across a revolutionary who is under the spell of outworn traditions . . . who would, for example, attach great importance to attending al-Arb'īniyyāt al-Ḥusainiyyah . . . and while he may repair to these crowded gatherings in the hope of infiltrating into them and collecting signatures for the peace movement, you will find him devoid of any desire to liberate the masses from the archaic traditions to which they are bound, thus forgetting that the attraction of vast crowds to these

ceremonies of mourning is by itself a great gain to the enemies of the people.[4]

A long rebuttal of this position appeared in *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī* more than three months later, although in the interval the question had been much argued in the prison wards. The rebuttal was by a certain "Comrade Naṣīr" and was entitled "What is Our Attitude toward the Ḥusaini Processions?"[5] "This question," wrote "Naṣīr,"

> has aroused a great deal of controversy in our organization. . . . The problem is whether we should war against these processions and aim at putting an end to them, or seek their transformation from a weapon in the hands of the enemy to a weapon of the revolutionary movement? To be able to cope with the problem I feel it is necessary to take into account that these processions exist regardless of our will . . . and the indications are that they will not vanish or decline in the near future. On the contrary, they have been growing year after year (! ! !)[6] and will assuredly persist even after the establishment of a People's Democracy in Iraq. Indeed in Russia they endured for more than fifteen years after the founding of Soviet power. By opposing beliefs that would, at need, be defended rather than readily forsaken, we will only isolate ourselves from the toiling masses of the people.
>
> If then it is not possible to eradicate the Ḥusaini processions, can we turn them to good account? Or to pose a more pertinent question: Is it in our interest–at the present time at least–to weaken these processions and in particular those of Karbalā' and Najaf? It is well-known that the Communists–and the revolutionaries, generally–can influence a part of the masses and persuade them to desist from going to Karbalā', Najaf, and Kādhimiyyah. Would this be the right thing to do? I do not think so and for the following reasons:
>
> (1) Lenin said: "Act where the masses are"; and I doubt whether the masses can congregate in such numbers anywhere in Iraq other than in these places of pilgrimage. . . .
>
> (2) In a country like Iraq where reactionary and fascist laws prohibit gatherings and demonstrations except for religious purposes ... it is

incumbent upon us to think seriously of utilizing these legal possibilities in the interest of the democratic movement and for the cause of peace. For fear of incurring the wrath of the reactionary circles, the government will long hesitate before meddling with the processions. . . .

(3) Nūrī as-Sa'īd's Constitutionalists[7] and the followers of Ṣāliḥ Jabr[8] have been exploiting the processions in a special way . . . and recently succeeded in some towns in splitting [the pilgrims] into two factions. Under the circumstances, are we not duty-bound to set the masses against these bands, against their masters?

(4) The history of our revolutionary movement ... is itself a testimony to the importance of these gatherings as a means of rousing the masses against imperialism. ... On such occasions the Peace Partisans distribute their pamphlets, collect signatures, and spread their ideas . . . and I for one have not forgotten . . . how [these processions] served in crystallizing the rallying cries . . . that facilitated and nourished the popular upheaval of November 1952....

There is also another side to this question. . . . [Consider the benefit to] the peasant who never thinks of going into the town neighboring his village, but would walk hundreds of kilometers to visit Karbalā'. . . . His horizon surely widens. ... He may shed some of the superstitions that flourish in his feudal environment and cease to believe in the fables of the ignorant *malālīs*.[9]... He will know even if incidentally that there is in the wide world other Moslems . . . and will hear of their problems . . . and their struggles. . . . And then didn't Ḥusain revolt against injustice . . . and would not this excite in him a greater sense of the injustice of his own condition? . . . All this in addition to what he will hear from the revolutionaries. . . .

Accordingly, the right course for us is to turn the processions into a weapon of the revolutionary movement without neglecting to combat the more reactionary practices and traditions associated with them.

The editors of *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, who were also, of course, members of the leading party prison committee, took great exception to what "Comrade Naṣīr" wrote and thought that his remarks were "an

astonishing hodgepodge of erroneous concepts from the point of view of both principle and reality." "In the first place," the editors added,

> the comrade places us before two alternatives: either to oppose religious beliefs or to support them, either to utilize them or strive to exterminate them. We wonder whether this is a realistic and principled interpretation of our well-known attitude toward the convictions of the people? Are we really under compulsion to choose between these two courses?
>
> Second, we are surprised ... at the way in which he applies the teachings of Lenin to the religious processions. . . .
>
> Third, in regard to the "usefulness" of the ceremonies ... it must be said that all those who voice revolutionary slogans on such occasions do not learn them on the tomb of Ḥusain but from revolutionaries who reach them at their factories or their villages and. through revolutionary influences remote from Ḥusain's shrine.
>
> Last, the citing of Ḥusain on injustice, which Comrade "Naṣīr" favors, is also something worthy of rejection.[10]

With this determinative pronouncement, the unusual debate on the pages of *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī* was brought to a close. By "our well-known attitude toward the convictions of the people," the editors had in mind the long-standing policy of the Iraqi Communists to avoid giving umbrage to religion or to the religious powers and, in general, to forbear publicly from the problem at all costs.

Did such a policy entail an abandonment of Lenin? Far from it. Lenin, in line with Engels, branded as "foolishness" any frontal attack on religion under unfavorable circumstances. "A Marxist," added Lenin,

> must be a materialist, i.e., an enemy of religion, but a dialectical materialist, i.e., one who puts the fight against religion not abstractly, not on the basis of remote, purely theoretical, unvarying preaching, but concretely, on the basis of the class struggle which is going on *in practice* and is educating the masses more and better than anything else.

In other words, in the view of Lenin, the Communist struggle against religion “must be linked up with the concrete practice of the class movement, which aims at eliminating the social roots of religion.”[11]

35

THE COMPOSITION OF THE PARTY (1949-1955)

In Iraqi Communist history the period 1949-1955 may not inappropriately be identified as the period of the ascendancy of the Kurds. They indubitably constituted in these years the real axis of the party, even though the weight of numbers was, in an absolute sense, on the side of the Shīʻī Arabs. To be more specific, in this period the Kurds not only provided all the general secretaries but, as Table 35-1 reveals, accounted for as high as 31.3 percent of the entire membership of the Central Committees. This represented quite a leap from the 4.5 percent that was their share in the party leadership in the time of Fahd, that is, in 1941-1948. To be sure, as the same table makes clear, the Shīʻī Communists entered now into their numerical rights, so to say, their component in the highest layer of the party having risen from 20.5 to 46.9 percent in the years referred to; but Shīʻī Arabs, it must be remembered, formed in 1951 about 44.9 percent of the total urban population of Iraq, whereas the Kurds added up to only 12.7 percent.

Another striking thing in regard to the composition of the top party command in this period is the sharp decline in the role of the non-Moslem minorities. The representation of the Christians at that level decreased from 22.7 percent in 1941-1948 to 3.1 percent in 1949-1955, that of the Jews from 9.1 to 3.1 percent, and that of the Sabeans from 4.5 percent to nil. However, the weight of the Sunnī Arabs also shrank from 36.4 to 15.6 percent.

The explanation for these changes which to an extent, as will be noted at the appropriate point, characterized also the party at large, must proceed from the fact that there was a break in succession. In 1949 the whole old leading cadre lay behind bars, and much of the party was in ruins. That the rebuilding of the underground was carried out upon the initiative of the Kurds determined to no little degree the character of the new cadre.

However, in measure as the party got back on its feet, the representation of the Kurds on the Central Committee progressively declined. Thus in June-September 1949, it was 66.7 percent, but in September 1949-August 1951, 40.0 percent; in August 1951-April 1953, 28.6 percent; in April 1953-June 1954, 28.6 percent and in June 1954-June 1955, 20.0 percent.[1] The relative security of their part of the country, where the hold of the government was never very firm, undoubtedly helped the Kurdish Communists in seizing the initiative: for a time in 1949-1950 the party was led from Kurdistan and not from Baghdād. But it must be borne in mind that the Kurds formed with the Shīʻī Arabs the most underprivileged sections of the population. Like the Shīʻīs, they were also not prone to knuckle down under repression. Not much of the same could be said of the Christian Communists who, however, belonged to a more physically exposed community and appear, perhaps on that account, to have been sufficiently impressed by the severe blows that fell upon the party. The decline of the position of the Jews within the leading stratum is basically explicable by the exodus of some 120,000 of their coreligionists from Iraq in 1949-1951, that of the Arab Sunnīs by the ebbing away from the party of Sunnī students and members of professions, largely by reason of its unpopular Palestine policy.

TABLE 35-1

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to Members of the Central Committees for the Period 25 June 1949 to June 1955 (1)

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin: Membership of Committees of 1949-1955 Compared with Membership of Committees of 1941-1948

	Committees of 1949-1955					Fahd's committees: 1941-1948				
	No. of members	*%*	*No. of individuals*[a]	*%*	*Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq*	*No. of members*	*%*	*No. of individuals*[a]	*%*	*Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1947 urban population of Iraq*
Moslems										
Shī'ī Arabs	15	46.9	9	42.8	44.9	9	20.5	6	21.4	41.9
Sunnī Arabs	5	15.6	4	19.0	28.6	16	36.4	9	32.2	26.7
'Alawī Arabs	–	–	–	–	–	1	2.3	1	3.6	–
Kurds	10	31.3	6	28.6	12.7	2	4.5	2	7.1	11.8
Turkomans	–	–	–	–	3.4	–	–	–	–	3.2
Persians	–	–	–	–	3.3	–	–	–	–	3.1
Jews	1	3.1	1	4.8	.3	4	9.1	3	10.7	7.0
Christians										
Arabized Chaldeans	1	3.1	1	4.8	6.4	7	10 22.7	4	6 21.4	5.9
Arabized Assyrians	–	–	–	–		1		1		
Armenians	–	–	–	–		2		1		
Sabeans	–	–	–	–	.3	2	4.5	1	3.6	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	–	–	.1	–	–	–	–	.1
Total	32	100.0	21	100.0	100.0	44	100.0	28	100.0	100.0

[a]In this column, individuals who served on more than one committee are counted once.

Sources: Based on Tables 19-1, 19-2, 19-3, 22-1, 29-1, and 31-1.

Another conspicuous change was the increase of the worker component of the Central Committees from 2.3 percent in 1941-1948 to 28.1 percent in 1949-1955, and of the peasant component from 5.8 to 15.6 percent at the expense of people of middle class origin, whose proportion decreased from 90.9 to 50 percent (see Table 35-2). In the instance of one committee, that which led the *Intifāḍah* of November 1952, the ratio of the workers reached as high as 57.1 percent (see Table 29-1). This enhanced importance of the laboring classes was the result of deliberate party decisions. It must not be overlooked, however, that while the figures relating to the workers reflected descent as well as current status, those relating to the peasants referred only to extraction, as none of the members of the Central Committees of this period lived by agriculture (see Table 35-3).

There were also in these years substantially fewer members with higher education and more with secondary schooling at the command level than under Fahd (compare Table 35-3 with Table A-20). This is obviously not unrelated to the conscious party emphasis on the humbler classes.

As life in the underground was now more hazardous than ever, youth dominated the highest organ of the party to a greater extent than in the time of Fahd: in 1949-1955, 33.3 percent of the members were under twenty-six years, 95.2 percent under thirty-six, and only 4.8 percent above thirty-five

(see Table 35-3). The corresponding figures for Fahd's period were 32.1, 78.6, and 14.3 percent (see Table A-21). All the same, the members of the Central Committee had now, on the whole, relatively longer standing in the Communist movement than in Fahd's days (compare Table 35-3 with Table 27-5).

In regard to the composition of the party at large, the information on hand is less precise; but membership lists relating to the provincial party organizations, captured on 13 April 1953 with Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī, the party's general secretary, and lists relating to the Baghdād party organization, captured on 21 February 1954 with Nāṣir 'Abbūd, a member of the Central Committee, yield data ample enough to permit a number of conclusions. Instructive facts also emerge from membership forms found at the Communist headquarters pertaining to Iraqis who were admitted into the party in 1952 and the first quarter of 1953. The relevant details are presented in Tables A-34 to A-42. In these pages it would be sufficient to indicate the more general trends.

TABLE 35-2

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to Members of the Central Committees for the Period 25 June 1949 to June 1955 (2)

Class Origin: Membership of Committees of 1949-1955 Compared with Membership of Committees of 1941-1948

	Committees of 1949-1955				*Fahd's committees 1941-1948*			
	No. of members	*%*	*No. of individuals*[a]	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*	*No. of individuals*[a]	*%*
Working class	9	28.1	4	19.0	1	2.3	1	3.6
Peasant class	5	15.6	3	14.3	3	6.8	1	3.6
Lower middle class	16	50.0	13	61.9	36	81.8	23	82.1
Middle class	–	–	–	–	4	9.1	3	10.7
Upper middle class	2	6.3	1	4.8	–	–	–	–
Total	32	100.0	21	100.0	44	100.0	28	100.0

[a]In this column, individuals who served on more than one committee are counted once.

Sources: Based on Tables 19-1, 19-2, 19-3, 22-1, 29-1, and 31-1.

TABLE 35-3

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to Members of the Central Committees for the Period 25 June 1949 to June 1955[a] *(3)*

Education		
	No.	*%*
Elementary	4	19.0
Secondary	11	52.4
College	5	23.8
No particulars	1	4.8
Total	21	100.0

Sex	
	No.
Male	21
Female	–
Total	21

Occupation		
	No.	*%*
Students	5[b]	23.8
Members of professions	6[c]	28.6
White collar	3	14.3
Workers	4	19.0
Members of armed forces	1[d]	4.8
Trading petty bourgeoisie	2	9.5
Total	21	100.0

Age Group in Year of Accession to Committee		
	No.	*%*
20 years	1	4.8
21-25 years	6	28.5
26-30 years	10	47.6
31-35 years	3	14.3
43 years	1	4.8
Total	21	100.0

Length of Association with Communist Movement in Year of Accession to Committee		
No. of years	*No. of members*	
1	2	57.1%
3	2	
4	4	
5	4	
6	1	42.9%
8	2	
9	2	
10	3	
13	1	
Total	21	

[a]Individuals who served on more than one committee are taken into account only once in these tables.

[b]One college student; 4 secondary school students.

[c]Including 3 ex-schoolteachers.

[d]Ex-lieutenant.

Sources: Based on Tables 29-1 and 31-1.

It is not certain what proportion of the total strength of the party the members cited in the seized lists represented, but they most probably formed the greater part, if we do not count the steady and occasional supporters and sympathizers who, as a rule, were far more numerous than the full-fledged party members. At any rate, the members, whose names were inserted in the lists, added up to 507.

Of these, ninety-two, or 18.1 percent belonged to the military organization of the party (see Table A-34), which, in its bulk, clearly consisted of common soldiers and noncommissioned officers. A comparison with the state of things under Fahd reveals a steep decline in the importance of military students (see Table A-35). In terms of geographical distribution, the advance of the military organization would appear to have been deepest, as Table A-36 suggests, in ar-Rashīd camp in the south of Baghdād, al-Washshāsh camp to the west of al-Karkh, and Jalawlā' camp in Diyālah. The infantry, communications, tank and armor, transport, and artillery units were, in that order, the most affected (see Table A-37). It must be kept in mind, however, that infantrymen formed the bulkiest portion of the army.

Insofar as the ethnic-denominational complexion of both the military and civilian components of the party is concerned, it is evident from Table A-38 that, as at the command level, so also at all other levels, the non-Moslem minorities scarcely mattered in this period. Furthermore, as can be inferred from Table A-39, Shī'ī Communists were preponderant among the civilians: they dominated, numerically speaking, the party organizations, not only in the purely Shī'ī provinces, but also in Baṣrah and to a lesser extent in Baghdād and Diyālah. The weight of the Kurds was also not confined to Arbīl and Sulaimāniyyah but could be felt in the Kirkūk, Mosul, Diyālah, and Baghdād organizations. Besides, the seventy-three Communists who seceded or were ousted from the party in February 1953 and came to be known as the faction of the Banner of the Workers, were Kurds for the overwhelming part.

As is clear from Table A-39 and from other evidence, the party was, in the first half of the fifties, concentrated in Baghdād, in the port of Baṣrah, in the holy city of Najaf, and at Nāṣiriyyah in the Muntafiq. The Communists were also strong in Arbīl and Sulaimāniyyah, and to a more pronounced degree than the figures in the table indicate, most of the members of the group of the Banner of the Workers being from these two provinces. The concentration of the party in Baghdād had, it will be noted, a less sharply expressed character than in the days of Fahd. This is perhaps not unlinked to the increased efficiency and greater watchfulness of the metropolitan police. Similar factors explain the relatively poor showing of the party at the Kirkūk oil center.

The party remained in these years essentially a party of the towns. Despite attempts to broaden its basis in the countryside, the proportion of peasants in its ranks was still negligible (see Tables A-40 and A-42). Rural teachers or health, survey, or irrigation officials constituted now, as formerly, the backbone of its piteously feeble rural branches. On the other hand, the party would appear to have invigorated its claim to represent the workers, craftsmen, and other little people of the towns. It is significant in this connection that out of the 66 Iraqis who were admitted into the party in 1952 and the first quarter of 1953, no fewer than 45.5 percent–as is brought out by Table A-42–came, according to their own definition, from the "working" or "toiling" or "earning" class, and 25.8 percent from the "peasant" or "worker-peasant" class; that 24.2 percent were actually engaged as workers, 13.6 percent as semiproletarians,[2] and 12.1 percent as craftsmen; and that 12.1 percent were unemployed, while 19.7 percent had a monthly income of 1 to 5 dīnārs,[3] 31.8 percent of 6 to 10 dīnārs; only 3 percent had an income above 30 dīnārs, and none above 40. In other words, the bulk of them came from the poverty-stricken or low-income urban groups.

Tables A-40 and A-42 would seem to point also to a marked decline in the role of students and members of professions. Indeed, the period of Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī (June 1949-April 1953) has sometimes been referred to as the "anti-intelligentsia" period in the history of the party.

As could be expected and as is strongly suggested by Table A-42, the party consisted in its majority of unmarried and extremely youthful people. The same was true of the League for the Defence of Women's Rights (see Table A-41), which was founded in May 1952 and constituted in effect the women's organization of the party.

BOOK THREE

THE COMMUNISTS, THE BA‘THISTS, AND THE FREE OFFICERS
from the Fifties to the Present

36

THE COMMUNIST HELM CHANGES HANDS, THE COMMUNIST RANKS CLOSE

The policy of "going into the streets" and of direct all-out struggle against the government, by which the impatient Ḥamīd ʻUthmān had sought the defeat of the Baghdād Pact,[1] came to nothing. The party, unprepared for the task as it was, suffered heavily. ʻUthmān himself was effectively, but not yet completely, played out. In June 1955, a majority of the members of the Central Committee, who had tried in vain to apply the brakes and bring ʻUthmān to reason, interfered decisively against him. They took the party printing press into their hands, removed ʻUthmān from the secretariat, reorganized the Central Committee (see Table 36-1), and, eventually, turned over the chief responsibility to Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī,[2] whom ʻUthmān had only the year before castigated for "right deviationism."[3] In a statement circulated among party members subsequently, they explained why they found it necessary "to pull down the individual barrier" which stood between them and the performance of their "duties." ʻUthmān had been guilty of a "onesided outlook," "individualistic decisions," and "hysterical ordinances." He had not only initiated undertakings characterized by "adventurism and foolhardiness," and thrown the best fighters of the party into "suicidal battles," or shown an inability to carry out a common policy with other patriotic forces, thus isolating the party politically; but had also been moved by "a spirit of conceit and enmity toward fraternal parties" and had paid "no real attention to international experience."[4]

TABLE 36-1

Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī's First Central Committee (June 1955 to the Unification of the Communists in June 1956)

Name	*Biographical data*
Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī" (Secretary)	See Table 31-1
ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah	See Table 31-1
ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd[a]	See Table 31-1
Farḥān Ṭu'mah[b]	See Table 31-1
George Ḥanna Tallū	See Table 31-1
Muḥammad Ṣāliḥal-ʻAballī	See Table 31-1
Hādī-Hāshim al-Aʻḍhamī[a]	See Table 31-1
ʻAṭshān Ḍayyūl al-Azairjāwī	See Table 29-1
Nāṣir ʻAbbūd	See Table 29-1

[a]Arrested October 1955.

[b]Appointed in fall of 1955 secretary for the mid-Euphrates region.

ʻUthmān did not submit readily to the new leadership. He forthwith "broke discipline," made contacts "behind the party's back," and attempted "to stir up . . . anti-party elements" in the Kirkūk and Sulaimāniyyah organizations.[5] But in April 1956, he sent a letter to the party center in which he recanted, owned to "the greater part of the responsibility" for past mistakes, and placed himself "unconditionally" at the disposal of the party.[6] Later, however, he abandoned the ranks and joined the Kurdish Democrats.[7]

The change of leadership paved the way for the ending of the schismatic situation in the Communist movement. Efforts had been made in the past to heal the breach, but could not be brought to a happy issue. According to a sensitively placed agent of the police, nicknamed "The Kurd," a delegation from the "Unity of the Communists" group went to the Soviet capital early in 1955 and attempted through Mahdī Hāshim, a political commentator on Moscow Radio,[8] to interest the Russians in the question of unity, but was unable to present its views. At a subsequent point, however, the same group succeeded in having the ear of Tūdeh. As a result, three accredited representatives of the Iranian party came to Baghdād, met with Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī of the "Banner of the Workers" and with Salīm ach-Chalabī,[9] a member of the Central Committee, and reportedly formed the impression that there was "no genuine Marxist-Communist party in Iraq." One of the

Tūdeh representatives proceeded afterwards to Damascus, talked the matter over with Khālid Bakdāsh, and joined with him in recommending the "fusion" of the various groups. Both also expressed the opinion that ʻAzīz Sharīf, a personal friend of Bakdāsh, was "the best educated" of the Iraqi Communists. But Ḥamīd ʻUthmān, the then still party secretary, "fearing for his position," brushed the recommendation aside and would only consent to "cooperation" on limited issues. So much for "The Kurd's" account,[10] which incidentally would explain the reference to ʻUthmān's "conceit and enmity toward fraternal parties" in the just-quoted July 1955 resolution of the Central Committee.

With ʻUthmān now out of the way, moves for union were made from all sides. Negotiations followed. Coming to terms did not seem difficult. Differences on matters of doctrine had vanished. The new leadership was inclined to see from the point of view of the rival groups, and openly admitted that the old policy of "left isolationism" had refuted itself.[11] All flowed smoothly until Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī of the "Banner of the Workers" insisted on a parity central committee, and would not yield on the point. His demand was tactfully but firmly rejected. Thus at first only the "Unity of the Communists" group merged with the Iraqi Communist party. In exchange for tribute paid to its fighters for "their sacrifices in the struggle against imperialism" it admitted, in a joint communique drawn on April 25 but published only in mid-June of 1956, to "the error" of having created and maintained an independent organization, and recognized that the coming into being of the Iraqi Communist party was "a national and class necessity." Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī and his faction did not return to the fold until 17 June 1956, when agreement was reached that the "Unity of the Communists," the "Banner of the Workers," and the Communist party would be represented in the first unified Central Committee in the proportion of 1:2:8, respectively, and that in the future selections to the highest as to all the various bodies of the party would be made "solely" on the basis of ability, firmness, and ideological orthodoxy. Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī duly acknowledged that in separating himself from the party in 1953 he acted in "a wrong and destructive way" and "as though the party is a group of individuals and not a political and moral entity known to the masses."[12] The old *Al-Qāʻidah, Rāyat-ush-Shaghghīlah*, and *An-Niḍāl* ceased

publication. The united party issued on July 22, 1956, a new journal, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* ("The Union of the People").

37

THE NEW STRONG MEN OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY: ḤUSAIN AḤMAD AR-RAḌĪ, ‘ĀMER ‘ABDALLAH, AND JAMĀL AL-ḤAIDARĪ

Three men stood at the head of the new unified Central Committee (see Table 37-1), and would in the coming critical years remain the prime and pivotal figures of the movement: Ḥusain Aḥmad as-Sayyid ‘AIī ar-Raḍī, ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah ‘Umar al-‘Āmirī, and Jamāl Ḥaidar ‘Āṣim al-Ḥaidarī. They stemmed from the three principal communities of Iraq: Ḥusain ar-Raḍī[1] was an Arab Shī‘ī ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah an Arab Sunnī, and Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī a Kurd. Nationalists, who are under the ideological compulsion to link communism with non-Arabism, insist that ar-Raḍī was a Persian, but the people of Najaf, his home town, say differently.[2] As in the instance of many other outstanding Communists, all three leaders descended from religious families.[3] The father of ar-Raḍī was a man of piety and a *sayyid*, that is, a claimant of kinship with the Prophet Muḥammad. The father of ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah was also a *sayyid* and a caller to prayer at the local mosque in ‘Ānah. The Ḥaidarīs–a very old *sayyid* family–provided in past centuries many of the *muftīs*[4] of the Ḥanafī and Shāfi’ī rites,[5] and not very long ago–during the reign of Sultan ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd (1876-1909)-one *Shaikh al-Islām*,[6] the highest religious dignitary of the Ottoman Empire. If the three Communist leaders were born into the *sayyid* order, they nonetheless did not belong in an economic sense or in terms of prestige to the same social class, for the *sayyids*, it will be remembered, did not form one but several classes. The family of al-Ḥaidarī was one of high-born landowners who had grown impoverished. The family of ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah approached the middling rank, and earned enough from its small linen shop to live in relative comfort. The family of Ḥusain ar-Raḍī was never far from the poverty line. His father was a petty clerk at a flour mill, his

brothers artisans of meager income. “I must tell you,” wrote ar-Raḍī in 1953 to Thamīnah Nājī Yūsuf, the young woman who shortly afterwards became his wife, “that I dispose of no material means, nor have any property or high degree or assured occupation. ... I come from a family which is ill off but honorable and of good repute. ... My life is not mine. The danger of arrest and torture hangs perpetually over me. . . . But I can promise ... to do my best to provide the wherewithal which would enable you to lead a virtuous life.”[7]

Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, a poet, painter, schoolteacher, street vendor, and the secretary general of the party from 1955 till his death in prison in 1963, was born at Najaf in the year 1924.[8] His formal education went no farther than the Elementary Teachers’ Training School in Baghdād. In 1942, before completing his course of study, he first heard of the Iraqi Communist party: an instructor had searched through the students’ bags and found in one of them copies of the clandestine Communist paper. In the following year, not many months after his appointment to a teaching position at Dīwāniyyah, he joined the party and took on the secret name of “Mukhtār.” In 1946 the authorities formed uneasy impressions concerning him, and turned him out of his job. He now moved to Baghdād and earned his living by selling broiled meat in the streets. On January 19, 1949, after a political demonstration, he was arrested and committed to prison. On his release in 1951 he assumed charge of the Southern Division of the party and became a familiar figure among the port workers at Baṣrah. In 1953 he rose to membership of the Central Committee and represented Iraq at the Second London Conference of the Communist Parties within the Sphere of British Imperialism. In 1954, having advocated an abandonment of the current “left” line, he was banished, so to say, to the mid-Euphrates but, as already noted, was recalled to Baghdād in June 1955, and advanced to the foremost rank of the party. He adopted at first the pseudonym of “Hāshim” then of “ ‘Ammār,” and after the July 1958 Revolution that of “Salām ‘Ādil.”[9]

Not much is known about the personal qualities of Ḥusain ar-Raḍī. The impressions he left on people who came in contact with him do not completely tally. Predispositions toward him of a friendly or unfriendly nature could in part account for the discrepancy. And then men have their different moments and their natures do not always consist of compatible elements. Muḥammad Ḥadīd, minister of finance and unquestionably the

most influential civilian in the first years of the Qāsimite regime, referred to Ḥusain ar-Raḍī as “a very quiet and courteous man.” He added, however, that ar-Raḍī was not easy of access and kept to the background, seldom appearing in public.[10] Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, the leader of the National Democratic party, set ar-Raḍī down as a “slyboots.” At the same time, ar-Raḍī was-Chādirchī felt–too rigid in his ideas and “looked neither to his left nor to his right.”[11] Somewhat in a different vein was the judgment passed by a hostile member of ar-Raḍī’s Central Committee in a statement he made to the police in January 1958: “He is sociable to the extreme; captivating; unusually persuasive; highly trained in party matters; liberal in his spendings; much prone to adventure; and guileful though feigning meekness and innocence.”[12] In the view of Nājī Yūsuf, an ex-school inspector, a lawyer, a member of the left wing of the National Democratic party, and ar-Raḍī’s father-in-law, ar-Raḍī “was calm and nearer to shyness than to ostentation.” “I saw him only on rare occasions,” added Nājī Yūsuf, “and did not discover that he was the secretary general of the Communist party until after the July Revolution, but I could say that he was the type of man who gives himself over wholeheartedly to the cause in which he believes.”[13] Friend and foe agree that he had strong Communist convictions. He, anyhow, suffered torture and death rather than betray the confidence that his party had reposed in him.[14]

TABLE 37-1

Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī’s Second Central Committee (from the Unification of the Communists in June 1956[a] to the Plenary Session of the Central Committee Held in September 1958)

Name	Faction	Nation and sect	Date and place of birth	Profession
Members of the Central Committee after the Union of the Communists in June 1956				
Members of Politbureau (elected at the plenary session of the Central Committee held in September 1956)				
Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī (Secretary)	Communist party	(See Table 31-1)		
ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah	Communist party	(See Table 31-1)		
Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī	"Banner of the Workers"	Kurd, Sunnī	1926, Arbīl	Ex-student, professional revolutionary
Other full members of the Central Committee				
ʻAtshān Ḍayyūl al-Azairjāwī[c]	Communist party	(See Table 29-1)		
Nāṣir ʻAbbūd	Communist party	(See Table 29-1)		
Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-ʻAballī	Communist party	(See Table 31-1)		
George Ḥanna Tallū	Communist party	(See Table 31-1)		
Farḥān Tuʻmah[d]	Communist party	(See Table 31-1)		
Candidate members of the Central Committee				
ʻAzīz ash-Shaikh[e]	Communist party	Arab, Sunnī	1929, ʻĀnah	Ex-schoolteacher; college professor in late fifties
Sālih al-Ḥaidarī[f,g]	"Banner of the Workers"	Kurd, Sunnī	1923, Arbīl	Ex-government employee
ʻAbd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf[e]	Unity of the Communists party	Arab, Sunnī	1917, ʻĀnah	Lawyer
Candidate members added at the Second Party Conference held in September 1956				
Ḥikmān Fāris ar-Rubaiʻī[i]	–	Arab, Sunnī	1926, Mandalī	Oil worker; ex-craftsman-soldier
Dāūd aṣ-Ṣāyegh[j]	–	(See Table 19-1)		
Ṣāliḥ ar-Rāziqī[k]	–	Arab, Shīʻī	1920, Dīwāniyyah	Petitions' writer; ex-government employee
Full members co-opted in 1957				
Sharīf ash-Shaikh	–	Arab, Sunnī	1916, ʻĀnah	Lawyer

Education	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*	*Subsequent history*
Higher Teachers' Training College	From an upper-class family of *sayyids*; son of an impoverish-landowner	1945 (19)[b]	Member Politbureau 1956-1963; killed 21 July 1963.
Higher Teachers' Training College	From a family of *sayyids* of middling income, son of a man of religion and small *mallāk*	1951 (22)	Member Central Committee 1956-1958 and 1958-1963.
Secondary	From an upper-class family of *sayyids*; son of an impoverish-ed landowner	1943 (20)	Joined the United Democratic party of Kurdistan 1957.
School of Law	From a family of *sayyids* of middling income; son of a small farmer and religious preacher	1950 (33)[h]	Member Central Committee 1956-1958 and 1958-1963; killed 1963.
Elementary; Military Crafts School	Peasant class; son of a peasant	1944 (18)	Arrested 10 July 1958; expelled from party subsequently.
Secondary	Lower middle class	1949 (29)	Arrested 1957; member Central Committee 1958-1963; now no longer in party.
School of Law	From a family of *sayyids* of middling income, son of a religious preacher	1947 (31)[ℓ]	Member Central Committee 1957-1963; defected 1963.

Name	Faction	Nation and sect	Date and place of birth	Profession
Full members co-opted in 1957 (Continued)				
Muhammad Bābilī, known as Kākī Fallāḥ[m]	–	Kurd, Sunnī	1928, Sulaimāniyyah	Grocer
Full members co-opted in 1958 before the July Revolution				
Hādī Hāshim al-A'dhamī[n]	–	(See Table 31-1)		
'Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd[n]	–	(See Table 31-1)		

Education	Class origin	Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement	Subsequent history
Elementary	Peasant class; son of a peasant	1946 (16)	Resigned and left party 1957.

[a]The Unity of the Communists party merged with the Communist party on 25 April 1956 and the "Banner of the Workers" Group on 17 June 1956.

[b]Formerly member of Shursh.

[c]Dropped from the Central Committee in 1957.

[d]Arrested January 1958; defected subsequently.

[e]Elevated to full membership 1957; arrested January 1958.

[f]Expelled from the party in 1957 after joining the United Democratic party of Kurdistan.

[g]Brother of Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī.

[h]Formerly member of People's party.

[i]Dropped from the Central Committee in 1958 on account of inefficiency, arrested 10 July 1958; expelled from the party subsequently.

[j]Dropped from the committee in 1957 for alleged "cowardice." Dāūd Ṣāyegh had led in 1944-1947 the factional League of Iraqi Communists.

[k]Arrested in 1957.

[l]Formerly cofounder of National Revolutionary Committee.

[m]Resigned and left the party in late 1957.

[n]Coopted after his escape from prison in the first part of 1958.

Sources: Statement to the police made on 28 January 1958 by Farḥān Tu'mah, member of the Central Committee, in Iraqi Police File No. 5062; undated statement made in 1963 by Ḥikmān Fāris

ar-Rubai'ī, another member of the committee, in File No. QS/119; undated statement made in April 1963 by 'Azīz al-Shaikh, also a member of the committee in Police File No. QS/26; supplement to verbal statement of Sharīf ash-Shaikh, member of the committee, dated 27 March 1963 in File No. QS/26; conversation of writer with Sharīf ash-Shaikh, 9 February 1964; and Files Nos. 3401, 3386, 3506, 5062, 2610, 5504, 799, 3368, 4583, QS/45, and QS/61.

TABLE 37-2

Summary of Table 37-1

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	Members of committee in June 1956		*Members of committee prior to July 1958 Revolution*		*All members shown in table*		*Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq*
	No.	*%*	*No.*	*%*	*No.*	*%*	
Moslems							
Shī'ī Arabs	4	36.4	2	22.2	5	27.8	44.9
Sunnī Arabs	4	36.4	4	44.5	7	38.9	28.6
Kurds	2	18.2	2	22.2	4	22.2	12.7
Turkomans	–	–	–	–	–	–	3.4
Persians	–	–	–	–	–	–	3.3
Jews	–	–	–	–	–	–	.3
Christians	1[a]	9.0	1[a]	11.1	2[a]	11.1	6.4
Sabeans	–	–	–	–	–	–	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	–	–	–	–	.1
Total	11	100.0	9	100.0	18	100.0	100.0

Education (all members)

	No.	*%*
Elementary	3	16.7
Secondary	6	33.3
College	9	50.0
Total	18	100.0

Class Origin (all members)

	No.	*%*
Working class	1	5.6
Peasant class	4	22.2
Lower middle class		
a) *sayyid* families	5	27.8
b) others	6	33.3
Impoverished upper *sayyid* class	2	11.1
Total	18	100.0

Sex

	No.
Male	18
Female	–
Total	18

(Former) Occupation (all members)

	No.	*%*
Ex-student[b]	2	11.1
Members of professions	7[c]	38.9
White collar	3	16.7
Workers	2	11.1
Members of armed forces	1[d]	5.5
Trading petty bourgeoisie	3	16.7
Total	18	100.0

Age Group in Year of Accession to Committee

	No.	*%*
27-29 years	5	27.8
30-34 years	8	44.5
35-39 years	3	16.7
40 years	1	5.5
49 years	1	5.5
Total	18	100.0

Length of Association with Communist Movement in Year of Accession to Committee

No. of years	*No. of members*
5	2
6	1
7	1
8	1
9	2
10	1
11	3
12	2
13	3
15	2
Total	18

[a]Arabized Chaldean.
[b]After leaving school: in prison or in underground.
[c]4 lawyers; 3 ex-schoolteachers.
[d]Ex -lieutenant.

Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, it appears, felt most at home in matters of practice.[15] In issues of ideology he yielded to ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah, his closest associate and the party’s highbrow. ‘Āmer was of the same age as ar-Raḍī, having also been born in 1924. His birthplace, ‘Ānah, is remarkable in that, among other things, it is the oldest town in Iraq, reckons in almost no illiterates, and has produced Communist leaders but no Communist followers.[16] Its people are celebrated for their tenacity and unremitting application. ‘Āmer formed no exception. As a pupil, he stood out, earning in 1941 a scholarship to the newly-founded King Faisal’s College, a unique boarding institution which accepted only a limited number of the best students from each province. But the college had to be closed down not long afterwards, as it was found to harbor too many Communists. ‘Āmer transferred to the Law School, and in due time completed the prescribed course. Under the influence of Marxist ideas since his days at King Faiṣal’s College, he participated in 1946 in founding the People’s party, but after its suppression in 1948 fell out with its leader, ‘Azīz Sharīf, drawing closer to the orthodox Communists and formally joining them in 1951. He may or may not have been associated for a time with the factional “Banner of the Workers.” At any rate, he rose quickly in the party hierarchy and early in 1955 was coopted into the Central Committee.

For force of personality, few Communists compared with ‘Āmer. Even Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, who was nine years his senior in the party, dimmed somewhat beside him. As can be gathered from a testimony by a member of the Central Committee,[17] ‘Āmer was a man very sure of himself–too sure, it is alleged, even to bother engaging in argument. He was also well-read[18] and, according to Chādirchī,[19] flexible, quick of understanding, and ready of resource. In the very crucial years of 1958 and 1959, he came to the forefront, rising to *de facto* first leadership of the party. The favor he found with General ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim had propelled him to preeminence. At the time, as an associate later put it,[20]” “‘Amer could go to Qāsim at any minute, the borders between them being open.” When later he–and the

Communists generally–fell from Qāsim's grace, his influence declined, and in 1961 he lost his position in the Politbureau and, with his Bulgarian wife, Anna Nkova, whom he had married in 1959,[21] left Iraq for Eastern Europe. With 'Āmer out of the scene, decisive authority in the party passed to Ḥusain ar-Raḍī.[22]

It remains to say a word or two on Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī, the third in the line of leadership and, before the July Revolution, the first of the Kurds in the underground. Al-Ḥaidarī had been born in 1926 in Arbīl. At the age of nineteen and in his last year of secondary schooling, he came under the influence of the Communists. A year later, he enrolled in the Higher Teachers' Training College but, after a demonstration and when still a sophomore, he was sentenced to four months' imprisonment and expelled from the college "for ever." Afterwards he complained to a group of Kurdish students that he had been signally punished because he was a Kurd and that Arab Communists had been more mildly treated, but one of the students reproved him and urged him to "persevere to the end and cling to . . . the internationalist principle." "The only solution to the Kurdish problem," the student added, "lies in communism and in standing side by side with the Arab Communists."[23] In subsequent years al-Ḥaidarī would appear to have had less of a Kurdish consciousness. In 1953, at least, he strongly opposed the creation of a distinct leading committee for the Kurdish Branch of the party and the incorporation in the party program of an article that admitted "the right of self-determination, including that of secession, for the Kurdish people."[24] It was in part on this issue, but mainly in protest against the Central Committee's extremist cast of thought, that he broke with the party in the same year and formed the splinter group of the "Banner of the Workers." After rejoining the ranks and elevation to the Politbureau in 1956, and more especially after the July Revolution, he did not emit more than a faint light. There would be suspicions in 1957 and 1958 that a man in the higher councils of the party was passing on treasonable information to the British Intelligence Service, and rumors would point to al-Ḥaidarī as the culprit, but the Communist leadership would not take the rumors seriously. Al-Ḥaidarī would in 1963 lay down his life in the service of his party.

At no other time in its history as in the first years of the leadership of the men whose lives and characters have just been sketched, did the party listen

more attentively to what Bakdāsh had to say. “The Syrian Communist party and its eminent leader, Comrade Khālid Bakdāsh,” read a decision taken by the Central Committee on 15 September 1955, “occupy the place of honor in the struggle and hearts of the masses of the people not only in Syria but also in Iraq and all the Arab Countries.”[25] Bakdāsh’s rise to deputyship in the Syrian parliament had no doubt greatly added to his prestige. One must guard, however, against projecting the authority he now enjoyed among Iraqi Communists backwards, that is, to the period prior to June 1955, or forwards, that is, to the period after 1959, when his influence sensibly declined.

38

THE BA‘TH OF THE FIFTIES: ITS ORIGINS, CREED, ORGANIZATION, AND MEMBERSHIP

At the point now reached, it is necessary to bring into view a political force which from the mid-fifties onward would make itself increasingly felt in the life of Iraq and, therefore, of the Communists: the Arab Socialist Ba‘th party.[1]

Ba‘thi beginnings are still to some extent wrapped in obscurity. Old Ba‘thists themselves do not agree on the facts or their precise sequence. It is beyond question, however, that the Ba‘th of the fifties emanated from three initially distinct groups (see Table 38-1).

One group embraced young men–students for the most part–who had first come together in 1939 under the impact of the “disaster” that had that year befallen Alexandretta. With some exceptions, they were, in their core, a tiny fraction of the thousands who abandoned their homes and moved into Syria when the district, which had a minority of Turks, was annexed by Turkey with the consent of France and in the teeth of bitter protests from its Arab and Armenian elements. Their recognized leader was 38-year-old Zakī al-Arsūzī, a graduate of the Sorbonne, a secondary schoolteacher, and a son of a lawyer and middling landowner of Antioch; who descended from a family of Arsūz, a village in the district of Alexandretta, and belonged by faith (like the majority of the Alexandrettan Arabs) to the Nuṣairīs or ‘Alawīs–an ultra-Shī‘ī sect that believes, among other things, that it is of the elect, that Islām has an allegorical and “hidden” sense accessible only to the initiated in its ranks, and that ‘Alī, a cousin and the son-in-law of Muḥammad, was an emanation of the divinity and had drawn so close to it as to become its *ma‘na*, its “meaning.” While Zakī al-Arsūzī remained much of a ‘Alawī–in 1942 in his book *al-‘Abqariyyah al-‘Arahiyyah fī Lisānihā* (“Arab Genius in Its Language”), in an obvious blending of

idealism with Nuṣairism, he interpreted the nation as “a guiding and creative *ma‘na”*–politically he drew his inspiration from racialism. At least, this formed the central theme of the intense agitation that he led against the Turks in Alexandretta between 1936 and 1938, and which brought about his expulsion from the district. From the misfortune of which his fellow Alexandrettans became now the victims, he deduced the need to arouse the youth of the nation. He thought of his group as a first step toward that end. For membership in it he set only one condition: to write or translate a book contributing to the resurrection *(“ba‘th”)* of the Arab heritage. According to his own account,[2] in 1939 he divided the group into two sections: one political, which he called “The Arab Nationalist Party,” and the other cultural, which he named “The Arab Ba‘th.” However, on a version put out by one of his disciples, he did not signify his intention to create the “Arab Ba‘th” until November 29, 1940, the anniversary of the loss of Alexandretta, by which time his “Arab Nationalist Party” had been allowed to lapse.[3] By still another version, the “Arab Ba‘th” was merely the name given to a bookshop that served as a meeting place for his group.[4] At any rate, by degrees his followers grew in number, but never to a considerable extent. They were attracted, it would appear, by the force of his speech and his great fervor. Why in the end they drew away from him is not altogether clear. They may have found his racism intellectually unsatisfying, or they perhaps thought that he was not sufficiently practical. The poverty into which he had sunk–he struggled along no one knew how–also affected him badly: he became depressed, irritable, bitter, and began to think of himself as a persecuted man. Anyhow, in 1944 his supporters abandoned him, and in the following year, led by Wahīb al-Ghānim, a physician-to-be and the son of a ‘Alawī landowner, merged with a group which had an independent beginning and which, from a historical standpoint, is far more important. To this group, however, they, and in particular the Alexandrettans amongst them, brought an energy and a warmth of passion that cannot be overestimated. Suffice it to say that Fāyez Ismā‘īl and Waṣfī al-Ghānim, who planted the first seeds of Ba‘thism in Iraq, were from Alexandretta and, incidentally, also ‘Alawīs.

TABLE 38-1

The Three Headsprings of the Syrian Ba'th Party of the Fifties

Place of origin of group	*Year of birth*	*Leading figures*	*Principal specific factor giving rise to group*[a]	*Main contribution to the Ba'th*
Predominantly District of Alexandretta	1939	Zakī al-Arsūzī (Moslem 'Alawī schoolteacher and son of a lawyer-middle landowner)	Syria's loss of Alexandretta	Ardor possessed only by injured people
Damascus	1939	Michel 'Aflaq (Christian Orthodox schoolteacher and son of a middle grain merchant) and Salāḥ-ud-Dīn al-Biṭār (Moslem Sunnī schoolteacher and son of a middle grain merchant)	Anxieties, questionings, and restlessness of intelligentsia	Ideology
Ḥamā	1938	Akram al-Ḥūrānī (Moslem Sunnī lawyer-politician and impoverished son of a wealthy landowner)	Big landlordry in Ḥamā	Mass peasant support and foothold in officer corps[b]

[a]The general factors in the development of all three groups were: 1. the French occupation; 2. the partition of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman empire and the resultant hindrances to the old trade routes; 3. the decline of the Islamic social order (and the Christian *millah* structure) and of the old values and loyalties; 4. the impact of European ideas; and 5. the enfeeblement of the traditional nationalists, that is, the nationalists predominantly drawn from the upper landed and mercantile classes and loosely organized in the National Bloc.

[b]It should be noted, however, that the peasants and officers were not formally enrolled in the party but remained attached to the person of Akram al-Ḥūrānī.

The group to which the disciples of al-Arsūzī adhered had received its impulse from Michel 'Aflaq and Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn al-Bīṭār. 'Aflaq and al-Bīṭār were in 1944 in the prime of life: the one was thirty-four years of age, the other thirty-two. Both had been born in Damascus and in the same quarter of the city, that of al-Maydān, a memorable area that is closely bound up with the history of the great rising of 1925-1926. Here the little people of the capital fought the French fiercely in street and garden, and remained unshaken in spirit despite a three-day shelling by the French artillery and widespread destruction. In brief, nationalism was in the very air of al-Maydān, and young 'Aflaq and al-Bīṭār could not help imbibing it. The quarter was noted for one other thing: it included the *bawāyek*– Damascus'

granaries–and formed the chief center for the grain trade of southern Syria. It was not by chance that the fathers of ‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār lived there: they were both middling grain merchants.

But although the principal founders of the Ba‘th belonged to the same quarter and the same economic class, their paths did not cross in the early phases of their life. The barriers that differences in religion raised were more difficult to surmount than the barriers characteristic of classes. Al-Bīṭār was a Sunnī Moslem and descended from a long line of *‘ulamā’*. For upwards of two centuries his family had been providing *imāms* (leaders of congregational prayer) and *khatībs* (preachers) to the local mosques. His grandfather, Shaikh Salīm al-Bīṭār, had a wide reputation for religious learning in cities as far apart as Cairo and Isṭanbūl. Al-Bīṭār grew up, therefore, in a very conservative environment. He attended a private Moslem-oriented elementary institution and was later sent to al-‘Anbar Secondary School, from which so many of the younger leaders of Syria graduated. ‘Aflaq had, on the other hand, been raised in the Christian Orthodox faith and Christians, on the whole, had not yet escaped the illiberal influence of the *millah*, the largely self-governing, ideologically self-contained Christian community of Ottoman times. However, by virtue of his frequent travels, his commercial dealings with men of different denominations, and his personal friendships with Sulṭān al-Aṭrash, the chief of the Druzes, and with the Moslem leaders of the 1925-1926 rising, ‘Aflaq’s father had freed himself from many prepossessions against things Moslem. All the same, he sent his son to a priest-run secondary school in the Christian quarter of Bāb-Tūma. With an already antisectarian cast of thought, young ‘Aflaq found the prevalent climate very uncongenial. “I was,” he said long afterwards,[5] “an exception among Christians and, on that account, constantly at odds with my companions and teachers. ... In the final year, after a clash with the administrator . . . , I transferred to the state preparatory school.”

It was only in 1929, and at the Sorbonne, that ‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār first met. They became in no time intimate friends. They shared experiences, read the same authors–Nietzsche, Mazzini, André Gide, Romain Rolland, Marx, and Lenin, among others–and were caught in the same Marxist wave that swept over the European campuses during the worldwide slump and financial crisis of 1929-1932. “We came to socialism,” they explained in

1944, “by the way of thought and science and found ourselves before a new, masterly, and fascinating explanation of all the political and social problems which harass the world generally and from which we Arabs in particular suffer.”[6] One factor had, however, eased their transition to the left: in the Paris of the early thirties only the Communists and socialists showed sympathy for Syria’s cause.[7]

‘Aflaq returned to Damascus in 1933 and al-Bīṭār in 1934. The one became a teacher of history, the other of physics. To judge by the views aired in *Aṭ-Ṭalī‘ah*, a weekly which, in conjunction with a number of their colleagues, they published for six months in 1935-1936, their preoccupation in this period was more with the social than with the national question. They were also clearly more at home with the Communists than with any other party, though they were never linked to them organizationally.

1936 marked a turning point in their ideological development: “in that year the socialists and Communists scored a brilliant victory in France. A by-effect of this was the emergence of the Syrian Communist party from underground and the increase and widening of its support. But in their victory they showed their true colors. ... It was plain now . . . that their sympathy for our cause was merely a pretense. No serious step was taken by them to restore our usurped rights to freedom and independence. The Syrian Communists, for their part, became nothing more than cat’s-paws of the French Communists and, by and large, of the French government.”[8]

These “events and symptoms” and mounting evidence of the “transformation of Soviet Russia into a nationalist state” and of its “abandonment of international communism” produced in ‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār “a profound spiritual and intellectual crisis” which kept them from writing or engaging in any work of a political kind for the next two years.[9] “This was a period,” said ‘Aflaq later,[10] “of exploration, of a feeling out of fundamental lines, of preparedness for a movement.” It coincided with the falling into disrepute of the National Bloc, that had up to that point led the struggle against France and had been unable to fulfill Syria’s hopes or avert the loss of Alexandretta. “Everyone,” added ‘Aflaq, “sensed that there was a vacuum, that the old leadership had gone bankrupt, . . . that a new movement had to be set on foot.” With the outbreak of the world war, this feeling sharpened.

In the autumn of 1939 small circles of students began forming secretly around ʻAflaq and al-Bīṭār, but the nucleus of what afterwards came to be called the Arab Baʻth party was not constituted until September 1940.[11] By that time France had been defeated, and ʻAflaq and al-Bīṭār had become less circumspect. The first handbill that they circulated–in late February 1941 in support of a strike against the French–bore the name of "al-Iḥyā' al-ʻArabī ("The Arab Renaissance"). They did not use the appellation "al-Baʻth al-ʻArabī," which has the same meaning, until months later. Initially, their activity was on a very narrow scale. After resigning their posts as teachers on the 24 October 1942, they stepped up their efforts. Their advance, however, remained painfully slow. In 1943, their party counted "fewer than ten members"[12] and was still of a diminutive size in 1945, when its executive organ, the Bureau of the Arab Baʻth, became elective in character. Apart from ʻAflaq and al-Bīṭār, the bureau included Madḥat al-Bīṭār,[13] a physician from Damascus, and Jalāl as-Sayyid, a middling landowner from Dayr az-Zūr. After the shelling and air bombing of Syria's capital by the French in May of that year, and the rallying to the party of al-Arsūzī's group in the following June, the Baʻth, which came now into the open, rapidly gained ground. To this contributed the agitation conducted by the party paper, *Al-Baʻth*, which first appeared on 3 July 1946. By 4 April 1947, when the first party congress opened, the membership, excluding supporters, "numbered in the hundreds," most of whom were students, the others being teachers or lawyers or medical practitioners or from other strata of the intelligentsia.[14] The congress approved the party's constitution and internal rules, and reorganized the party's executive, electing ʻAflaq as *ʻAmīd* ("Doyen"), al-Bīṭār as secretary general, and Jalāl as-Sayyid and Wahīb al-Ghānim as members.[15]

The tragedy of the Palestinian people in 1948 and the period of political unsettlement and military coups which it ushered in increased the Baʻth's power of attraction. In 1949, however, the party suffered a momentary setback. This was occasioned by the appearance in the press, after one of ʻAflaq's experiences of imprisonment, of a meek and adulatory letter bearing his signature, dated 11 June at al-Mazzah jail, and addressed to Ḥusnī az-Zaʻīm, the leader of the first of Syria's putsches. "We are prepared," the letter read, "to keep an impartial course and hold our tongue if you so desire. ... As for me, I have decided to retire definitively from

politics. ... I believe that my mission has come to an end and that my method is not appropriate to the new era."[16] Why ʻAflaq signed the letter is still a matter for speculation. The prevalent opinion is that he was not physically tortured. At any rate, the episode produced the impression of an inherent faint-heartedness of character. His followers were, to begin with, shocked; but in the end, in view of his undoubted earnestness and the devotion that his sincerely held ideas inspired, they forgave him his all-too-human lapse and forgot the affair. The public also forgot. If the personal prestige of ʻAflaq somewhat declined–his holding of the portfolio of Education from 14 August to 19 November 1949 under Colonel Sāmī al-Ḥinnāwī, the second of Syria's military dictators, was, if anything, a political mistake–the party before long resumed its growth. By 1952, the number of its members had increased to about 4,500.[17] Nonetheless, it still lacked a mass support. Partly for this reason, partly due to the impatience of its leaders and their predilection for quick and effortless political ascents, but also under the pressure of the oppressive rule of Adīb ash-Shishaklī, Ḥinnāwī's successor, the Baʻth linked its fate to that of a more broadly based group led by Akram al-Ḥūrānī.

Ḥūrānī's group had come into being mainly as a reaction against big landlordry in Ḥamā. This district of acute social contrasts–of exorbitant wealth on the one hand and repelling poverty on the other–was virtually held in fief by a few landed families. In Ḥamā and the neighboring area of Maṣyaf, the Barāzīs alone owned forty-nine villages, the Aḍhms twenty-five, and the Gailānīs twenty-four.[18] They had their own armed men and did with their peasants what they pleased. The state and the men of religion were wholly on their side. Their dominance over the townsmen was also well-nigh complete.[19]

Hūrānī had himself been born, in 1912, to an affluent landowner of Ḥamā; but an elder brother squandered the possessions of the family. He, therefore, never had enough money and had to live very frugally in his youthful years. He began his education in Ḥamā, then attended the Tajhīz, a Damascene public preparatory school. Upon graduation, he entered the Medical College at the Jesuit University, but had to withdraw in 1932, having been implicated in an attempt upon the life of Ṣubḥī Barakāt, a pro-French ex-head of the Syrian state. In 1936, however, he was admitted to the Damascus Law School. That same year he joined the pan-Syrian P.P.S.-

the Parti Populaire Syrien-but left its ranks in 1938, when he returned to Ḥamā to practice law. Soon after, he took the reins of Ḥizb ash-Shabāb (Youth Party), which ‘Uthmān al-Ḥūrānī, a cousin of his, had set on foot. He gave the organization two basic aims–independence from the French and a just redistribution of the national wealth-and one central slogan: *“Hātū al-Quffah wa-l-Kurēk Lina‘sh al-Āgha wa-l-Bēk*” – “Fetch the Basket and the Shovel for the Burying of the Agha and the Bey.” Against the landowners who were harsh with their peasants, Ḥūrānī did not hesitate to use violent means. Groups of daring *qabaḍāys*– tough young men– captained by ‘Alā’-ud-Dīn al-Ḥarīrī, a devotee and owner of a plebeian coffeehouse, went into action as soon as word reached them of an injustice done by a landlord or by his armed retainers. Before long, Ḥūrānī took on a romantic aspect in the eyes of the peasants. Someone was at last paying their oppressors back in their own coin. By degrees his fame spread to the neighboring districts and farther. His hurrying to the aid of Iraq’s military movement in 1941 at the head of a number of spirited young officers from his home town added appreciably to his prestige. In 1943, he was elected as Ḥamā’s deputy, and proceeded to hurl defiance at privilege, raising the social question for the first time in Parliament. In 1945, he attacked shaikhly power so fiercely that Ṭarrād al-Mulḥem, chief of al-Ḥsainah, a branch of the Ruwalah tribe, fell on him, pistol in hand, but other representatives slipped between them. In the radical circles of the day he was now dubbed as the “daring” or “free deputy” and the “demolisher of feudal leaderships.” His command of groups of irregulars in raids upon Zionist settlements in 1948 procured him still more political support, and particularly in the officer corps, where he already had a foothold, having at an early date persuaded many of his sympathizers to enroll at the Ḥomṣ Military Academy. His name was associated with all three of the coups of 1949, though on his precise role little light can as yet be shed. He became, anyhow, surrounded with a certain shade of mystery. His enemies began to refer to him as “the fox with the manicured claws.” In the meantime, his political organization had been growing steadily. By 1950, when he decided to change its name into the Arab Socialist party, it counted no fewer than 10,000 members and was able to attract as many as 40,000 people from the countryside when in the same year it convoked at Aleppo the first peasant congress in Syria’s history.[20]

It was, to a large extent, this power to draw forth mass interest and sympathy, a power unaffected by the vicissitudes of his relations with the military, that turned the Ba‘th party toward Ḥūrānī. More than that, in the eyes of many Ba‘thists, he complemented their own leaders in essential respects. ‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār were and remained at bottom teachers. They dealt primarily with ideas and spread these ideas mainly in sitting rooms. Their feet were not always firmly on the ground. By contrast, Ḥūrānī was a “man of the people” and at the same time endowed with a political instinct and a genuine gift for leadership, not to mention his good grasp of the issues of the hour.

The “merger” between the two parties took effect in November 1952. To the new command were appointed three leaders of the old Ba‘th–‘Aflaq, al-Bīṭār, and as-Sayyid–and two leaders of the Arab socialists–Ḥūrānī and Anton Maqdisī, a Christian Orthodox Damascus University professor from Yabrud, a village in the district of Qalamūn. The movement was henceforth to be called “The Arab Socialist Ba‘th party.” For its basic program, it adopted without any alteration the Ba‘th constitution of 1947.[21]

In practice, the “merger” was only partially realized. The officer and peasant following of Ḥūrānī, for example, were never incorporated into the party, but continued to be attached to him personally. Nonetheless, the step propelled the Ba‘th into a historical role of first importance. But the “merger” had its adverse side. This partly manifested itself in the domain of ideas–a domain to which it is now necessary to turn.

Ideologically, the Ba‘th was in the forties, to a predominant extent, Michel ‘Aflaq writ large. Intellectualizing for the party tended to be his preserve. All Ba‘thists recognized him then as their authoritative teacher. In the fifties, however, in Syria, partly in consequence of the “merger” just discussed, and partly as a result of the rapid and abrupt expansion of the ranks, ‘Aflaq’s “doctrinal monopoly” was broken. So was also the party’s unity of thought. By 1957, as a contemporary internal publication suggested,[22] the Syrian Ba‘th had become a babel of conflicting ideological currents. But in Iraq the faithfull would, for the next half decade, continue to seek guidance in the pages of ‘Aflaq: in their eyes ‘Aflaq and orthodox Ba‘thism were inseparable.

‘Aflaq’s ideas are nowhere systematically developed. They are scattered through his public speeches, impromptu remarks to “disciples,” and very short essays composed, for the most part, under the pressure of events.[23] When drawn together, they do not add up to an entirely consistent point of view. This is not unrelated to ‘Aflaq’s tendency to rely more on feeling and “faith” than on analysis and induction from facts. It has also to do with ‘Aflaq’s language, which is akin to that of the poets and is distinguished more by its suggestiveness than by its logical lucidity.

But the logical difficulties that, on examination, his ideology betrays, are not due merely to his romantic style, but also to his undisciplined eclecticism: his thoughts are a mixture of an essentially humanitarian nationalism and aspects of the individualism of the Enlightenment, the democratism of the Jacobins, the youth idealization of Mazzini, the class standpoint of Marx, the élitism of Lenin, and over and above that, a strong dose of Christian spirituality and a nationalistically interpreted Islam. The mixture is often mechanical. In other words, ‘Aflaq makes no serious attempt to synthesize the ideas that he imbibed.

At the risk of producing a more compact impression than is justified by his writings and speeches and the 1947 constitution of the Ba‘th party–which, in substance, is his brain child–it will help to bring together his more general notions, beginning with those that may be subsumed under his ideology of ends.

“Unity, Freedom, Socialism”–the ends that ‘Aflaq projected for his followers–were not, he would insist, fashioned by his mind, but derived from the “soul” and “depths” of the Arabs. They express not merely the “interests” of the nation, but also the “truth” that it possesses and which will “declare itself, however the power of the existing conditions.”[24] The three ends demand and complete each other: they are “an indivisible whole.” None can be realized at the expense of the others.[25]

“Unity,” that is, the unity of the Arabs, is not a means to an end or something useful, It is a “natural right.”[26] The nation, in other words, ought to live in one state. This is a moral necessity. At the same time, unity is historically inevitable. The nation has a natural and irresistible tendency to cohere, to gather its parts: “None of the Arab countries can, in isolation from the others, fulfill the conditions necessary for its life”; “all differences

among the sons [of the nation] are incidental and false and will vanish with the awakening of Arab consciousness."[27]

In an official pamphlet explaining the party's aims, the inevitability of the union of the Arabs is feebly and hastily linked to empirical, or what purports to be empirical, factors: the oneness of their language; their "common history" (they have "one memory"); the "identity of their present experience" (they all suffer from imperialism and confront problems analogous in nature); the interdependence of their "defence interests" and of their basically "feudal agrarian" economies; and the similarity of their geographical habitat (whereof the saying that "in every Arab country you find a coast, a mountain, a desert, a tent, a date-palm, and a camel.").[28] But these factors are not examined with any care. Historical divergences are lightly dismissed. Adverse or divisive present-day facts are nowhere looked in the face. The whole discussion is impelled by what is at bottom, an a priori conviction of the desirability of unity.

In ʻAflaq, the necessity for the synthesis of the Arab countries is really logical. It flows from the characteristics that he attributes to the nation and to nationalism, and from his view of the nature of the relations between the nation and the individuals of which it is composed.

The nation is "a living being."[29] The connection tying the individual Arab to it is "organic,"[30] that is, he has no meaning apart from the nation and can attain fulfillment only as a member of it: if he is insensitive of his national roots, he will live a life of barrenness.[31]

As a living being, the nation has a "mission" that is "eternal" in the sense that it is continually renewed.[32] What is meant by this was at one time the subject of much curiosity among Baʻthists, but they were never able to extract a satisfactory explanation out of ʻAflaq. The "Arab mission," he maintained, does not consist of "definite aims" or of "principles to be embodied in programs," nor is it "something inert divorced from the souls of the sons of the nation and from its life and its trials." It is, rather, a "propensity" or "a belief before everything else."[33] The "earnest and daring" manner in which the Arabs cope with their present, their "sensitivity" as regards the evils marring their life, the "candor and courage" with which they admit their own shortcomings, the "tribulations" which they suffer, their "manly determination" to liberate themselves by their own effort–all this is "the beginning of the eternal mission," for

“through this experience they will discover anew the meaning of truth, righteousness, loyalty, work, sacrifice, sound and independent thinking, thinking that is unafraid of the pressure of the rabble.”[34] In short, through the “eternal mission” expression is given to “all the elements of goodness, life, and creativity” that are latent in the nation.[35] Or better still, all the acts of the Arabs–past, present, and future–which evoke what is best in them and by which they contribute to the common good of humanity, constitute their “eternal mission.”[36] Obviously, ‘Aflaq is here particularizing with regard to the Arabs a familiar concept that comes from the German Enlightenment, and especially from Herder.

He also repeats Herder when he asserts that the nation is possessed of a “soul” or a “spirit.” This “soul” he at times identifies with Islam: “Arabdom [is] a body whose soul is Islam”; “Islam is the tremor that stirs the latent forces of the Arab nation.” At other times, however, he speaks of Islam as something distinct from the Arab soul (“Islam . . . produced a revolution ... in the soul of the Arabs”), as an embodiment of “fixed absolute values”[37] (that is, values which, at least in their origin, are independent of the Arabs[38]), as “a heavenly message” which the Arabs, by reason of “essential excellences and virtues” with which they are endowed, were “chosen” to communicate to the world. Again, sometimes ‘Aflaq speaks as if Islam is fundamental and Arab nationalism is derivative: “Islam is universal and eternal. ... In every important period of history ... it gives expression to one of the infinite meanings that are latent in it from the start. ... Its [present] meaning ... is the need to orient all efforts toward the strengthening and uplifting of the Arabs and to confine these efforts within the bounds of Arab nationalism.” The point is clinched in another passage: “Today . . . the force of Islam . . . discloses itself in a new form, that of Arab nationalism.” Elsewhere, however, ‘Aflaq appears to reverse the relationship between nationality and religion: “Islam, in its pure essence, arose out of the heart of Arabism”; it is “a part of it, feeding it and revealing the most significant of its spiritual and idealistic aspects.”[39] But the thing that matters here is not ‘Aflaq’s disregard of logic, but the very practical aim that lies behind his romantic rhetoric: the harnessing of the emotions called forth by Islam in the service of the Arab national movement or, to be specific, of the Ba‘th party.

If the nation is a “living being” with a distinctive “soul” and an “eternal mission,” then Arab nationalism cannot be said to be an “idea” or a “theory,” or something imported from abroad. It is rather a “spirit” which, “like life, is from us and its awakening is the awakening of life in us.”[40] It exists “in our past achievements and our present agonies, in our virtues and our vices, in our written history and in the history engraved deep inside us.” It is “love before everything else,” the selfsame love that ties the individual to his family, for “the nation is but an extended family.” It is also fated. An Arab is not at liberty to be or not to be a nationalist: “Nationalism ... is like the lineaments of our face which are bequeathed to us even before our birth. ... It is an overpowering fate.”[41] Because it has its basis not in race or blood, but in the “Arab spirit,” and because the Arab is bound not only to his nation but also to mankind,[42] which is but “one mass with common interests and common values,” Arab nationalism is humanitarian in tendency:[43] “He who feels the sacredness of nationalism is driven to revere it in all people. Nationalism is thus the best road to an authentic humanism.”[44] Again, because it is spiritual in essence, Arab nationalism is oriented toward “freedom,” which brings us to the second fundamental theoretic end of the Ba‘th party.

“Freedom” means, first, the freedom of the nation to direct its own affairs which, in turn, means its freedom from external control as well as from indigenous arbitrary rule. The nation has a “natural right” to be sovereign, and national sovereignty is synonymous with popular sovereignty. The theoretical commitment of the Ba‘th to a “democratic” state is unambiguous: “the people alone are the source of all authority”;[45] “in the Arab state . . . the executive branch of the government shall be responsible to the legislature which shall be directly elected by the people”;[46] “democracy is indispensable, but ... by virtue of the insufficiency and muddled state of education, the perversion of morals, and the very bad economic and health conditions, the people . . . may not be able to exercise their rights in a proper manner and to the fullest extent. We do not on that account call for depriving them of their rights. On the contrary, we ought to work through them . . . and in this way strive to raise their standards. . . . For us they are the end and the means. Our aim is to serve the people by means of the people.”[47] However, as will be shown in a little while, some of the concepts related to the Ba‘thists’ ideology of means strongly detracts

from their “democratism.” Moreover, it must be remembered, especially in this connection, that Ba‘thī theory is one thing and Ba‘thī practice another or, more precisely, that the Ba‘thist as an aspirant to power is quite different from the Ba‘thist as a holder of power.[48] But this, of course, is not something peculiar to the Ba‘th.

“Freedom” means also the freedom of the Arab individual. In dealing with this theme, ‘Aflaq now and then appears to shift the emphasis away from the “nation” or the “people” or “the greater number,” to use one of his own definitions of the “nation.” He thus maintains that “the individual alone vivifies and renews the group” and that “the group produces only relative values.”[49] “Some say,” he adds,

> that Arabism is above everybody and they mean by Arabism what the group decides. There is danger in such talk. For our part, we believe that Arabism is above everybody in the sense that it is above [narrow] interests, egotism, and transient and false considerations. But there is one thing which we believe to be above Arabism and that is Truth. . . . Our watchword, therefore, ought to be Truth above Arabism until Arabism merges with Truth.[50]

What this precisely means remains a question, but the apparent implication is that the practical rendering of the watchword is in the showing of regard for the personality of the individual and the taking of precautions against the “tyranny of the group.” This finds expression in the following rule, which is embodied in the Second Principle of the Ba‘th constitution:

> freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of belief, and freedom of art [are] sacred things *which no authority can diminish* [emphasis added].

As it stands, this formulation seems to ascribe a sort of absoluteness or inherent value to personal freedoms, and to put forth on behalf of the individual an indefeasible claim upon the nation and the state. In other words, it seems to assert in this context the primacy of the individual. But the indefeasibility of the claim is vitiated and the primacy of the nationalist

principle restored in other clauses, and explicitly in Article 41 (2) of the constitution:

> The state shall be responsible for the protection of the freedom of speech, publication, assembly . . . *within the limits of the higher Arab national interest*. . . [emphasis added].

Indeed, the more dominant tendency in ʻAflaq is toward restricting freedom to the Arab individual "who is bound up with the spirit of his nation."[51] Even though he insists that the individual is "the foundation" and "the most important thing," he at the same time affirms that as "an individual in a nation," he has to fulfill the "conditions" that the national tie entails.[52] But who ultimately determines what these "conditions" are or what constitutes "the higher Arab national interest"? The nation defined as "the greater number"? The "minority," that is, the Baʻth party, in whom, as ʻAflaq suggests in one place,[53] the living "idea of the nation" or of Arabism becomes incarnate? But, as already noted, ʻAflaq also says that "Truth is above Arabism." To whom does one have to refer for that? The trouble is that the formula is thrown in without warning and is nowhere elaborated. In short, in connection with the concept of "freedom" as in other connections, there is in ʻAflaq an undissipated haziness and, more than that, no real examination of ideas, no attempt to draw out and reconcile the implications of differing principles, no thinking of arguments through to the end.

The same deficiencies characterize what he has to say with regard to the third general aim of the party: "socialism." Although here the influence of the Communists upon him is indubitable, he is at pains from the first to point out that a wide gulf separates him from them. This in part is demanded by his contention that "socialism," like the other objectives of the Baʻth, issues from the "depths" of the Arab nation.[54] He has, however, basic differences with the Communists. In the first place, his socialism is not connected with a materialist interpretation of life, but with a standpoint in which, to use his own words, "the spirit is the great hope and the deep motive force of our rebirth."[55] Even later, in the sixties, when many of his followers would move to the left and he himself would somewhat shift his position, he would still maintain: "I am not against Marxism but the Baʻth is scientific socialism plus spirit."[56] In the second place, his socialism is not

“the first philosophy, the view that guides all life,” but merely a “tributary deferring to a source, which is the national idea.” Being thus fundamentally nationalist, Ba‘th! socialism cannot constitute “a factor of internal division and conflicts.”[57] Does this imply a commitment to the thesis that the nation is essentially a harmonious whole? The First Principle of the Ba‘th constitution affirms as much: “all differences among the sons [of the nation] are incidental and false.” For his part, ‘Aflaq goes at one point as far as saying that the Arab nation “which expressed itself ... in manifold ways in the laws of Ḥamūrābī, the poetry of the Age of Ignorance, the religion of Muḥammad, and the culture of the epoch of [Caliph] al-Ma‘mūn is, through the different eras, moved by one feeling and one aim, notwithstanding the intervals of disruption and deviation.”[58] It is not clear what this aim or feeling is, but it has apparently to do with that most abstract of concepts, the “eternal mission.” At any rate, what could his statement mean if not the intrinsic concord of the nation? This is what ‘Aflaq should have held, but he doesn’t all the time. “A minority,” he points out in one place, “owns most of the wealth of the nation and controls and disposes of power in a manner that accords with its desires.” This “exploiting class will not give up its wealth or its interests by a mere appeal in the name of nationalism or of the spirit or of progress. Struggle is, therefore, inescapable.”[59] This is, despite the ritual reference to the “spirit,” the Marxian concept of class conflict, which cannot be married, even mystically, to the view of a basically harmonious nation.[60]

Anyhow, if with regard to the just-mentioned concept the Marxists and the Ba‘th are on common ground, in their respective attitudes to property they diverge again. In one sense, according to the *Communist Manifesto*, “the theory of the Communists may be summed up in the single phrase: Abolition of private property.”[61] But the Ba‘th constitution proclaims “ownership and inheritance” as “natural rights,” assures their persistence “within the limits of the national interest” (Article 34), and looks forward to the guaranteeing by the state of a “minimum” of real property for all citizens (33). At the same time, however, the constitution calls for the “cancellation” of foreign companies and concessions; the nationalization of banking services, public utilities, major natural resources, and big production and transport facilities (29 and 35); the limiting of the ownership of small industries to a degree “congruent with the economic standard

enjoyed by the rest of the citizens" (31); and the narrowing of agricultural ownership conformably to "the ability of the owner to cultivate the land fully without exploiting the efforts of others" (30). Other envisaged measures include economic planning (37); direct control by the state of internal and external trade (36); workers' profit-sharing and participation in factory management (32); social security against old age (40); free medical services (39); and free education for all citizens in all stages (46). This is as far as the "socialist" vision of the classical Ba'th goes. Of course, from the standpoint of the Communists, it never rises above the "petty bourgeois" horizon.

What theoretical justification does the Ba'th give for its "socialism"? Differing arguments are put forward here and there in the party's literature. One lacks any tangibility, and seems to be an argument from self-evidence: it .simply ranks the "idea of socialism" among the "eternal verities" which are "clear and powerful."[62] Another is manifestly an argument from the nature of the Arabs: "the personality of the Arab nation is distinguished by a strong desire for . . . equality" which must be satisfied.[63] The Ba'th's "socialist" conclusions also flow from such ethical premises as "all citizens are equal in regard to human value," or "the existing distribution of wealth in the Arab homeland is unjust."[64] Moreover, there are arguments that are strictly utilitarian, as is this one: "the [national] struggle at the present time can only be based on the generality of the Arabs and these will not take part in it if they are exploited."[65] There is, finally, the argument that claims that "socialism is a necessity issuing from the depth of Arab nationalism, being the ideal system which will allow the Arab people to realize its potentialities and develop its genius to the full."[66] The word "necessity" appears in this context to refer merely to moral compulsion. However, in view of the Ba'thī belief that "unity," the first of the basic ends of the party, is both morally and physically necessary, and that "unity" and "socialism" demand each other, the Ba'th would have also to contend that "socialism" is historically obligatory.

It is time now to turn from the Ba'thists' ideology of ends to their ideology of means, that is, to their view of the method of obtaining their ends and of the instrument by which these ends are to be attained.

According to 'Aflaq, the distinctive method of the Ba'th is al- *inqilāb.*[67] This term is commonly used to refer to a *coup d'état*. But this is not the

sense that ‘Aflaq attaches to it. By *inqilāb* he actually means “revolution.” He does not employ the more current word *ath-thawrah*,[68] partly because he is, as ever, anxious to differentiate his movement from that of the Communists, even in matter of terminology. His notion, however, has also its own peculiarities. For him, the *inqilāb* is first and foremost a spiritual phenomenon, a revolution in Arab values, in the Arab way of thinking. In ‘Aflaq’s words, it is the “awakening” or “rebirth of the Arab spirit,” the curing of the “nation” before the curing of the “state,” for “what is the state . . . but a body without a soul.”[69] However, in measure as this change in the inner spirit of the nation takes place, it makes its impact felt–as appears to be the implication–on external reality in a “decisive” manner, producing not a partial or superficial but a thoroughgoing transformation in all aspects of life.[70] Now and then ‘Aflaq speaks as if this process is determined: “We fight the status quo not only because it is diseased but because we are compelled to fight,” for “the nation, despite its backwardness . . . possesses truth and this truth manifests itself, however the power of the existing facts; the *inqilāb* is this manifestation, this attestation of the existence of truth.” At other times, however, ‘Aflaq is more in the voluntarist vein: “The practical expression of the idea of *inqilāb* is struggle . . . and by struggle is meant . . . the recapturing by the nation . . . , after that long slumber . . . , of its yearning to wrestle with life and with fate; its viewing of existence deeply and heroically; and its seeing of value in effort before its seeing it in the fruit of effort.”[71]

How will the external phase of this *inqilāb* be realized? Peacefully or violently? ‘Aflaq’s language is often indicative or suggestive of militancy. Moreover, he appears to exclude peaceful means in his remark that the politically dominant and economically exploiting class will not voluntarily surrender its position.[72] In one passage his com-bativeness reaches surprising lengths: “The national action that is susceptible of success is one which evokes hatred to the death toward those who personify an idea antithetical to [nationalism]. It is idle for the members of the movement to combat antagonistic theories and say why should we bother with persons. An antagonistic theory does not exist by itself. It finds its incarnation in persons who must perish so that it too may perish.” This is a lapse into the most frightening fanaticism and calls to mind the brutalities that the Ba‘th committed against the Communists in Iraq in 1963. This is not to suggest

that there is here a causal connection. Moreover, in fairness to ʻAflaq, it ought to be said that this is the only instance where he gives expression to such a grim and appalling idea. His diametrically opposite observation to the effect that "nationalism, like every love, ... is as distant from hatred as possible" is indubitably more representative of the general tendency of his thought. At the same time, there is no question that ʻAflaq is for pressing "hard" by the Baʻth on others to restore them, as he puts it, to their "true selves" and their "true selves" must be, it is legitimate to infer, Baʻthī selves. [73]

But how does ʻAflaq relate the Baʻth party itself to the *inqilāb?* Of course, the Baʻth is the chief instrument by which the nation is to be reshaped. The need for the *inqilāb* has called the party into existence. Indeed, its existence denotes that the *inqilāb* has already begun, for the *inqilāb*, in its incipient form as a conscious feeling of the necessity for change, takes effect at first not in the wide mass of the people but in "a minority." ʻAflaq, who in another connection has said: "by the nation I intend the greater number," maintains in this connection that numbers are not in themselves "sacred," that the nation is not an arithmetical collection but an "idea" embodied in "all or some" of its members and that, therefore, those in whom this idea is personified have the "right" to speak in the name of the whole nation.[74] In other words, here ʻAflaq pushes the democratic majoritarian principle to the background and brings the élitist principle to the fore. But what kind of sociological formation is this minority, this élite, or, to be specific, the Baʻth party, supposed to be? Its main element comes from the youth of the nation, for the *inqilāb* is a renewal and where could renewal come but from youth. The spontaneity, the dash, the idealism, the selflessness of youth are among the most precious treasures that the nation possesses.[75] Of course, not every young Arab qualifies, for the party must "in the first place" represent "the element of the spirit" and constitute a portrait in miniature of "the pure, healthy, and advanced nation" that it seeks to build.[76] It will, therefore, rest upon a distinct kind of youth. It will count in its ranks those who "when they see right on one side, will for its sake oppose all other sides and instead of trying to please all people will infuriate those whom they believe to be corrupt and in the wrong." Its members will be "hard on themselves and hard on others." They will be armed with "science" and will devote themselves fully to revolutionary

party activity. They will also be conscious of the conditions of their nation, loyal to its cause, jealous of its rights, and responsive to the aspirations and needs of the people. Their sincerity, their distinctiveness will be recognized from their ordinary doings, from their daily conduct, even from "the inflection of their voice."[77]

Inasmuch as the Ba'th has, as is the implication, come to incorporate such elements, its appearance was a "revolution" in Arab history, "a scission, a wilful conscious break with what came before it and, despite [unavoidable] blemishes . . . , an ascent to a new level of thinking and morality."[78] For that same reason, it is also a true expression of the national spirit. Who, therefore, is distant from the Ba'th is distant from the nation.[79] The path of the nation is the Ba'thī path. No other party can take its place. The logic of history is on its side:[80] "Our movement is the destiny of the Arabs in this age."[81] This is obviously an echoing of Lenin's dictum: "the future is with us in any case."

By degrees, the current of feeling and thought, started by 'Aflaq, found its way into the countries neighboring Syria.[82] In the first half of 1949, when the debacle in Palestine was urging minds in many parts of the Arab East to question the existing order of things, embryonic Ba'thī circles came to life in Iraq upon the initiative of a number of young Alexandrettans, notably Fāyez Ismā'īl, a student at the Baghdād School of Law and the son of an Arab 'Alawī artisan, and Waṣfī al-Ghānim, a student at the Higher Teachers' Training College and the brother of Wahīb al-Ghānim, a member of the Syrian Ba'th Command. Another figure who played a role in this initial stage was Sulaimān 'Īsa, a Sunnī Arab poet from Aleppo.

The nascent organization took footing first in Baghdād's colleges in the suburb of al-A'ḍhamiyyah, but gradually extended its influence to Nāṣiriyyah, Ramādī, Baṣrah, Najaf, and other places. Its converts were, for the most part, college and secondary school students, who could find little outlet for their enthusiasm in the ranks of the nationalist Istiqlālīs (Independents). Quite a few had, indeed, been members of this party, but had broken with it on account of its political half-wayness and the temperamental inability of its leaders to live illegally.

At first the chief Ba'thī organizer was Fāyez Ismā'īl, but upon his return to Syria in 1950 the leadership passed to 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān ad-Ḍāmen, a

native of al-Aʻẓhamiyyah, a student of law, and the son of an Arab Sunnī merchant from Baṣrah. In the party ad-Ḍāmen is remembered as "a noble-minded young man who rendered some services." His role was, in any case, brief. In 1951, Fū'ād ar-Rikābī took the helm and retained it in his hands for the next eight years.

Ar-Rikābī, an engineer-to-be and a Shīʻī, had been born in 1931 at Nāṣiriyyah. His father was a poor government official but his mother, a second cousin of ex-Premier Ṣāliḥ Jabr, came from a middle-class family and belonged to the tribe of Banī Rikāb, whence the name by which he chose to be known. At school, in his home town, he imbibed the pan-Arabism that strongly colored the courses taught under the monarchy. Politics began to attract him when he was sixteen or seventeen years of age. At the time he leaned towards the Istiqlālīs, though he never formally hooked up with them. While still in Nāṣiriyyah and later, after his entry into the College of Engineering at Baghdād in 1949, he had occasions to witness the Communists in action, and realized that they were far superior to the Istiqlālīs in tactics, organization, and theoretical resources. The nationalist cause needed new concepts, new methods, new stimuli. These things the Baʻth, whose stirrings had found an echo in his college, seemed to provide. In 1950 ar-Rikābī joined the party. How he came a year later to have the reins in his own hands is unclear. Part of the explanation may lie in his penetrative ability. There was apparently also a division in the ranks. Aḍ-Ḍāmen himself fell ill and drew off. Anyhow, under ar-Rikābī the party rose in number and in quality. From a total of only about 50 members in 1951, it increased to more than double this figure in the middle of 1952, when it was recognized as a constituent branch by the parent body in Syria. After that, it went on growing, counting 289 members, excluding supporters, in June of 1955. As is suggested by Table 38-2, it drew its strength largely from the student population and from the city of Baghdād, as well as from Nāṣiriyyah, ar-Rikābī's home province. If at this point it received a blow by the police that led to the break-up of some of its organizations, it recuperated in less than a year and, though it continued to be relatively weak in a numerical sense, it exerted a weight in the antimonarchic camp out of proportion to its size by virtue of its youthful energy and the discipline that ar-Rikābī had imparted to it.

TABLE 38-2

Membership of the Iraqi Ba‘th Party in June 1955

Geographical Distribution

	No. of members
Baghdād	
Iraqis	72
Non-Iraqi Arabs	28[a]
Provinces	
Nāṣiriyyah	69
Mosul	11
Diyālah	6
Ramādī	5
Karbalā’	4
Ḥillah	4
Baṣrah	3
Dīwāniyyah	2
Sulaimāniyyah	1
Unspecified	84
Total	289

Religion

	No. of members
Moslems	284
Christians	5
Total	289

Occupation

		No. of members
Unspecified		164
Students		102
Secondary school	15	
Colleges		
Law	17	
Medicine	13	
Teachers’ training	8	
Commerce	5	
Arts and sciences	3	
Pharmacy	2	
Other	4	
Unspecified	35	
Others		
Peasants		12[b]
Government officials		8[c]
Lawyer		1
Labor union official		1
Telephone operator		1
Total		289

[a]Including 15 Jordanians (and Palestinians), 5 Baḥreinis, 1 Libyan, 1 Tunisian, 1 Saudi Arabian, 1 Ḥadramī, and 1 Lebanese.

[b]All from Nāṣiriyyah province.

[c]Including Fū’ād ar-Rikābī, who worked as an engineer in the Ministry of Development.

Source: Based on the Ba‘th membership list seized by the police on 25 June 1955. Iraqi Police File on Ba‘th party refers.

The founding of a branch for the Ba‘th in Iraq in 1952, and earlier in Jordan and Lebanon–in 1947 and 1949, respectively–added to the “merger” in 1952 with the group of Akram al-Ḥūrānī, led to the adoption in 1954 of new internal rules for the party.

Under the older rules–those of 1947–a number of features distinguished the organization of the Ba‘th.

In the first place, its structure was simple. The basic unit was the *firqah* ("division"), which consisted of at least twelve men. Two or more *firqahs* formed a *shu'bah* ("section"), and two or more *shu'bahs* a *fir'* ("branch"). Above the *fir's* came *hay'at al-qiyādah* ("the command staff"), which was composed essentially of the heads of the party's Administrative, Cultural, Labor, Athletics, and Finance Bureaus, and of the head and members of the Politbureau. At the peak of the whole structure stood the *'Amīd* ("Doyen").[83]

In the second place, the appointment of the leadership of the various units from above characterized all levels except the highest. In other words, the rule did not apply to the *'Amīd*, who was elected for a period of two years by *Majlis al-Ḥizb* ("Party Council"), which was meant to meet twice yearly and had the power to determine the general policy of the party. The *Majlis al-Ḥizb* comprised "natural members," that is, the *'Amīd*, the heads of the bureaus and of the *fir's*, and the members of the Politbureau, as well as "elected members," representing the various *fir's*. The elective members outnumbered the others by at least two to one.[84]

In the third place, the organization embraced "members" and "principal members." The "principal members" were defined as the members "specially responsible for the activities and progress of the party." From their ranks were drawn the secretaries of the "divisions" and the "sections" and the members of the administrative bodies of the "branches" and of the various bureaus and, of course, the *'Amīd* himself. They alone had the right to elect members to *Majlis al-Ḥizb*.[85]

Most interesting of all were the powers vested in the *'Amīd* who, though elected by and responsible to *Majlis al-Ḥizb*, was somewhat incongruously referred to in the rules as "the highest authority *(marja')* of the party in all its policies and the director of all its organizations." He alone made the appointments to all the key party posts.[86] His "command staff" had a purely consultative function. More than that, no Ba'thī could rise to "principal membership" without his approval.[87]

The internal statutes of 1954 differed from these rules in several important respects.

First, two new units of organization were added, one, the three-to-seven-men *ḥalaqah* ("cell"), at the very bottom, the other, the *qutr* ("region") directly above the "branch." The "division" remained the basic unit, but

comprised now three to seven “cells.” The “region” covered a whole country. Thus Iraq became a “region” with its own “regional command” and “regional secretary.”[88]

Second, the elective principle was substituted for the method of appointment from above at every level except the lowest, that of the “cell,” whose secretary had to be chosen by the leadership of the “division.” Under the new articles, the “regional secretary” was to be elected by the “regional command” from among its members and the “regional command” by a “regional congress” made up of the secretaries and other leading members of the party’s “branches.”[89]

Third, the old differentiation between “members” and “principal members” was abolished. The new categories were “candidates” and “active members,” and a “candidate” became an “active member” automatically after a six-month probationary period unless notified in the meantime of his ineligibility.[90] In practice, as will be noted in due course, other kinds of membership, such as “organized partisan” and “organized supporter”[91] were introduced, at least in Iraq.

But the most significant change was the drastic diminution of the powers of the *‘Amīd*. The title itself was annulled. Michel ‘Aflaq was made the secretary general of the “national command,” to which “all the bodies, organizations, and commands of the party “became formally subject and which now supervised “all party affairs having a national character.” But as secretary general, ‘Aflaq had merely the authority to preside over and call for meetings of this command, to keep the record of its sessions, to represent it in all contacts and discussions with party and nonparty bodies and individuals, and to act as its mouthpiece “on all national questions.” However, as one of its members, he had, of course, a voice in its deliberations and resolutions.[92]

The first national command was constituted in March 1954 and comprised, in accordance with the rules,[93] the secretaries of the regional commands and others elected by the members of these commands from among themselves. The Iraqi, Lebanese, Jordanian, and Syrian party “regions” were represented in the proportion 1:1:2:3, respectively.[94] This proportion was later changed several times, essentially in keeping with the change in the relative strength of the different party “regions” or as other circumstances dictated. For the subsequent national commands, turn to

Table A-50. As we do not intend to refer again to any of these commands, except where required by our account of the events in Iraq, one or two observations regarding them are in order here. From the summary analysis of their composition in the period 1954-1970, included in the accompanying self-explanatory Table 38-3, it is clear that the commands were drawn predominantly from the members of the professions and the middle and lower middle classes. In terms of religion and sect, the representation of Orthodox Christians, Druzes, and ʻAlawīs was noticeably higher than their proportion in the total population of Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon. The Shīʻī element was relatively weak, particularly after 1963,[95] but the weight of the Sunnīs was adequate. The educational qualifications of the members were high and, in so far as age was concerned, the commands were, in a marked degree, youthful in character.

TABLE 38-3

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to the Members of the National (Pan-Arab) Command of the Ba'th Party (1954-1970) (Summary of Table A-50)

Nationality

	No. of members	%	*No. of individuals*[a]	%
Syrian	26	29.6	12	26.7
Syrian of Lebanese origin	1	1.1	1	2.2
Iraqi	23	26.1	14	31.1
Lebanese	21	23.9	9	20.0
Lebanese of Palestinian origin	3	3.4	1	2.2
Jordanian	–	–	–	–
Jordanian of Palestinian origin	2	2.3	2	4.5
Jordanian of Syrian origin	7	8.0	2	4.5
Jordanian of Saudi Arabian origin	1	1.1	1	2.2
Saudi Arabian	2	2.3	1	2.2
Adenite	1	1.1	1	2.2
Sudanese	1	1.1	1	2.2
Total	88	100.0	45	100.0

Religion

	Religion and sect of all members				*Religion and sect of Syrian, Iraqi, Jordanian and Lebanese members*		
	No. of members	%	*No. of individuals*[a]	%	*No. of members*	%	*Sect's estimated % in total 1970 population of Syria, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon*
Moslem Sunnīs	43	48.9	22	48.9	40	47.6	42.2[b]
Moslem Shīʻīs	18	20.5	10	22.2	18	21.4	26.7[c]
Moslem ʻAlawīs	5	5.7	4	8.9	5	6.0	3.3
Moslem Zaidī	1	1.1	1	2.2	–	–	–
Druzes	6	6.8	3	6.7	6	7.1	1.7
Orthodox Christians	14	15.9	4	8.9	14	16.7	3.3[d]
Catholic Christians	1	1.1	1	2.2	1	1.2	4.3[d]
Total	88[e]	100.0	45[e]	100.0	84	100.0	

Education

	No. of individuals[a]
College	44
Secondary	1
Total	45

Sex

	No. of individuals[a]
Male	45
Female	–
Total	45

Age group[f] **in year of accession to command**

	No. of individuals[a]
23-24 years	2
25-29 years	10
30-34 years	14
35-39 years	8
40-44 years	10
45-49 years	1
Total	45

Occupation		No. of individuals[a]	%
Army officers[g]		6	13.3
Lieutenant general	1		
Major generals	3		
Brigadier	1		
Lieutenant colonel	1		
Civilians			
Party workers		11	24.5
Members of professions		28	62.2
College professors	2		
Schoolteachers	8		
Lawyers	9		
Engineers	4		
Physicians	4		
Pharmacist	1		
Total		45	100.0

Class Origin		No. of individuals[a]	%
No information		1	2.2
Classes of low income		8	17.8
Peasants	3		
Workers	3		
Official (policeman)	2		
Classes of lower middle income		13	28.9
Tradesmen	6		
Men of religion	2		
Petty landowners	3		
Artisan	1		
Petty agricultural entrepreneur	1		
Classes of middling income		20	44.4
Landed men of religion	2		
Trading men of religion	2		
Men of religion	2		
Trading local *za'īm* (leader)	1		
Merchants	4		
Landowners	7		
Impoverished landowning aristocrat	1		
Military aristocrat	1		
Classes of high income		3	6.7
Landowning shaikh	1		
Landed aristocrat & chief of a religious sect	1		
Landed shaikh of *ṣūfī* (mystic) path	1		
Total		45	100.0

[a]In this column, individuals who were elected or appointed to the command for more than one term are counted only once.

[b]The percentage is for Sunnī Arabs only. Kurds, Turkomans, etc., not included.

[c]The percentage is for Shī'ī Arabs only.

[d]The percentage is for Christian Arabs only.

[e]Except for two Arabized Kurds all are Arabs. Approximate.

[g]Rank in year of access to the Ba'th National Command.

The composition of the national commands may be compared with that of the Iraqi regional commands for the years 1952-1970 shown in Table A-49 and summarized in Table 58-1. Though we will be returning to this table more than once, we will briefly note here that the Iraqi commands came from reaches of the economic order lower than those from which the national commands emanated. Thus 25.5 percent of the members of the Iraqi commands originated from the classes of low income, 38.3 percent from the classes of lower middle income, and 29.8 percent from the classes of middling income. The corresponding figures for the members of the national commands were 17.8, 28.9, and 44.4 percent. Perhaps part of the explanation lies in the fact that in the fifties and sixties the middle class was much broader in Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan than in Iraq. It will further be

noted that the majority (53.8 percent) of the members of the Iraqi commands of 1952-1963 came from the underprivileged Arab Shīʻī sect. However, the sectarian physiognomy of the subsequent commands radically changed. On this as on the growing role of the military after 1963 we will have more to say at a more appropriate point.

39

THE ARABIZATION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY'S VIEW AND THE RISINGS AT NAJAF AND Ḥ.AYY

The undoing of Ḥ.amīd 'Uthmān in June of 1955 put an end to the ascendancy of the Kurds in the Communist party. It also facilitated the Arabization of its standpoint–a process essentially induced by the *de facto* meeting of the Soviets, Arab Communists, and Arab nationalists on the common ground of irreconcilable opposition to the Baghdād Pact. In internal directives issued toward the end of August, that is, about one month before the conclusion of the Soviet-Egyptian arms agreement, the new Communist leadership deplored the "negative" and "isolationist" attitude that the party had been taking with regard to the problems of the Arab peoples. "The Arab comrades in our party," read the directives,

> fearing a fall into chauvinism, sometimes hesitate to defend Arab causes and in justification falsely adduce the fact that there exist two main national groups in Iraq. . . . But the fraternal Kurdish people has no interests which are incompatible with the interests of any of the Arab countries. . . . Support for the national struggles of the Arab peoples is a noble duty which common national ties impose and is but a constituent part of international solidarity. Internationalist sentiments, if underived from deep national roots and from a craving for national liberation, turn into a dream, an empty phrase, a cosmopolitanism. . . . Our taking pride in our Arabism and our feeling of brotherhood with the Arab peoples form, therefore, important spurs ... in our struggle against the dominance of the imperialists and of reaction.[1]

The party had no inkling that back in March President Gamāl Abd-un-Nāṣir had sounded out Chou En-lai in Rangoon in regard to the purchase of arms from the Soviet Union, and that the ground for the transaction, which Moscow approved and which was to weaken in a radical way the overpowering influence of the Western countries in the Arab East, had by now been smoothed.[2] Only days before the twenty-eighth of September–that is, before the world first learned of the transaction–the party circulated in a special supplement of *Al-Qā'idah* a speech that Khālid Bakdāsh delivered at Damascus on 26 August and in which he referred to the Egyptian regime in hostile and unmeasured terms.[3] After 28 September, however, no trace of unfriendliness toward the government of 'Abd-un-Nāṣir remained and, as the Arab national movement entered a decisive phase, the Arab character of the party's orientation became clearer and more pronounced. As of November 13, in pursuance of instructions from the Central Committee, the party began to wage a political struggle under the slogan "For a National Arab Policy" and to agitate for "a national democratic government" that would pull Iraq out of the "aggressive Baghdād Pact," and bring it onto "an independent Arab national path"–a path of "neutralism" and "solidarity with the Arab countries."[4] After the nationalization of the Suez Canal on 26 July 1956, the party identified itself completely with "the battle of Arabdom." As has not happened at any previous party occasion, the Second Party Conference, held in September of that year, closed with cheers for "Arabism." At the same conference the party recognized that the Arab national movement was "progressive and democratic in form and content," that "the territory inhabited by the Arab people in Iraq constituted an indivisible part of the Arab homeland," and that "the Arabs are one nation . . . inasmuch as they form a stable historical group, live on a common territory–notwithstanding the present artificial frontiers–speak a common language, possess the prerequisites of a unitary economy, and have a common psychological makeup which finds its expression in a common Arab culture and common traditions and in their fervent desire for unity." The party, however, tied the fulfillment of the pan-Arab idea to "the disappearance of imperialism from the Arab world and the carrying out of democratic reforms."[5] In all this the party was but sharing a position that the Syrian Communists had taken on May 7, 1956.[6] It was also obviously influenced by the Soviet reappraisal of national

revolutionary movements and of the role of “the national bourgeoisie” in newly independent countries–a reappraisal on which the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, held in February 1956, set the seal.

In the Second Party Conference just referred to, the Central Committee made also a point of defining the nature of the “battle” that lay before the party, the people, and Arabdom. While not dismissing the likelihood of a popular uprising in Iraq or, in that eventuality, of a direct intervention by Turkey or the English on the strength of the Baghdād Pact, or, further still, of “an armed interference by the imperialists” against the emancipated Arab countries, the Central Committee was more inclined to the view that the coming battle would be one of “a predominantly peaceful character,” and would in Iraq “count essentially upon a mobilization of the national forces in a wide front and the application of pressure in a concentrated manner and in various forms with a view to changing the existing policy into one consonant with the independent Arab national trend.” The Central Committee, however, made haste to add that “the question of violence is for us a question. . . determined by the behavior of the enemy–by his willingness or unwillingness to bow down to the will of the people.”[7]

The attack on Egypt by Britain, France, and Israel in late October 1956, the parallel intrigues against Syria carried on by the governments of Iraq, Britain, and the United States[8]–with the transparent aims of isolating Egypt and pulling Syria into the orbit of the Baghdād Pact–and the ruthlessness with which the authorities suppressed Iraqi crowds demonstrating in support of Egypt, altered the party’s perspective and impelled it to switch to an insurrectionary policy.

But in Baghdād itself, the Communists were unable to mount any large-scale action against the government, in view of heavy concentrations of police forces and weak coordination with the Ba‘th, the only other active opposition party.[9] Accordingly, like the Ba‘th, the Communists could set on foot only a series of relatively small, rapidly moving, and lightly armed demonstrations in dispersed districts of the capital. Similar tactics were applied, when necessary, elsewhere, and especially in Mosul and Kirkūk. But it was in Najaf and Ḥayy, where they were strongest, that the Communists launched uprisings of impressive power.

A number of factors contributed to the strength of the Communists at Najaf, the holiest city of the Shī‘ah. For one thing, Najaf was still, as it had been for centuries, the seat of oppressive wealth and dire poverty. For another, Najaf was and remains at one and the same time a center for the most stubborn religious traditionalism and a ferment for the most advanced of revolutionary ideas. Politically speaking, there is no town in Iraq that is more independent or more refractory. Its people have in reality never reconciled themselves completely to the fact of government. Moreover, the subterranean chambers and passages with which it abounds make it an ideal haven for rebels of all kinds, and especially for underground parties. There were also circumstances of a more particular order which proved to be of immense help to the Communist cause. To begin with, many of the active Communists in Najaf were sons or close relatives of the *‘ulamā’* and religious scholars[10]–a class with a strong pull over local police and administrative officers. Furthermore, it so happened that the judge of Najaf, Bāqir Kamāl-ud-Dīn, was much under the influence of local forces and of his son, ‘Adnān, a revolutionary, and dealt most leniently with the Communists who were brought up before him for sentence. The Communists were also fortunate in the physicians, members of the party, men like Dr. Khalīl Jamīl aj-Jawād, Dr. Muḥammad Riḍa aṭ-Ṭarīḥī, and Dr. ‘Abd-ul-Karīm al-Kadawī, whose fame went through Najaf and who ministered to the poor of the town free of charge.[11] Another asset of the Communists was as-Sayyid ‘AIī as-Sayyid ‘Abbūd as-Sayyid Salmān, a member of the Najaf Party Committee. He descended from a family of well-known and extremely influential *sayyids*, who provided the hereditary heads of the Zuqurt, one of the two town tribes or municipal factions which through the better part of the nineteenth century and down to the First World War dominated the life of Najaf.[12] In the fifties, the family still carried enough weight in Ḥuwaish, one of the four quarters of the old town, that it was well-nigh impossible to track or arrest a Communist within its limits.[13] In other words, as-Sayyid ‘Alī as-Sayyid ‘Abbūd as-Sayyid Salmān had pressed the elaborate structure of old loyalties into the service of the party.

It was from the Ḥuwaish quarter that began many of the manifestations sparked by the tripartite attack on Egypt. The guiding role of the Najaf Party Committee was not to be mistaken. But nationalists, led by Shaikh

Aḥmad, son of the famed Shaikh ‘Abd-ul-Karīm aj-Jazā’iri and a member of the old Independence party, took also an active part. On the placards, carried into the streets, ran the inscriptions: “Down with the Martial Courts!” “Down with the Criminal Nūrī as-Sa‘ī!” “Long Live Jamāl ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir!” “For a People’s Government That Would Act in Harmony with the Liberated Arab Countries!” Beginning on November 1, 1956, the movement increased with every succeeding day, reaching a climax on the twenty-fourth of that month, when, according to a secret official report, members of the police, beset on every side by angry crowds armed with daggers, pistols, stones, and huge canes, “began to think of themselves and their fate and, falling a prey to panic, fired in the air.”[14] In the official version, two of the demonstrators were killed, and twenty-seven others and nine policemen were injured. But the tally was generally believed to be well below the actual figure. The incident so heightened popular ill feeling that on the morrow the *‘ulamā’* refused to perform their religious duties. The police now completely disappeared from the streets. Called out, the troops, instead of doing the government’s bidding, fraternized with the crowds. “The demonstrators,” wrote Iraq’s chief of secret police, “climbed up on army cars, . . . inveighed against His Excellency Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, and shouted for the downfall of His Majesty the King, . . . while the troops watched, most of them in manifest approbation.”[15] Apprised of the turn of events, Nūrī as-Sa‘īd requested two Shī‘ī notables and ex-ministers, the Kāḍhimiyyah merchant and banker ‘Abd-ul-Hādī ach-Chalabī, and Ḥillah’s principal landowner ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Mirjān, to proceed to Najaf on 28 November and talk the *‘ulamā’* into calming the people. The *‘ulamā’* proved willing, but made their intervention contingent on the release of political prisoners, the compensation of the victims, and the punishment and transfer of the responsible policemen. The government immediately acceded to their demands, and withdrew fifty-eight members of the police from the city. The unrest, however, mounted and spread to neighboring Kūfah. Invited to a meeting at Karbalā’ by Shī‘ī members of the cabinet on the evening of the twenty-ninth, the *‘ulamā’*, in the words of a confidential police report, “now presented altogether different demands and their demands varied and multiplied, each *‘ālim* giving vent to his own desires.”[16] It soon became apparent that the *‘ulamā’* had no real influence over the demonstrators, for when at last they did formally exhort the people

to keep the peace and tried to impress upon them that disturbances were "inconsistent with the commands of religion," their appeal-to quote from the same police source–"had no effect as most of the common people, being Communists or nationalists or their fellow-travelers, were of a different mind and in an obdurate disposition."[17] Although the commander of the armed forces in Najaf took pains to remind the populace on December 8 that the *'ulamā'* had spoken and that their word was "a *shar'ī fatwah*[18] compelling obedience to their orders and compliance with their wishes,"[19] popular excitement did not subside until a week later, and not before a wave of strikes and demonstrations in support of Najaf had swept through Baghdād, Mosul, Kirkūk, Sulaimāniyyah, and Arbīl, and had led to the arrest of the principal opposition leaders, the indefinite closure of schools and colleges, and the severance of upwards of three hundred students from academic life.

The flame of unrest had not yet gone out in Najaf when it flared up in Ḥayy, a town of about 25,000 people, lying on the Gharrāf some 225 kilometers to the southeast of Baghdād. Communist organizations not only in the capital city but in all the various districts, and especially in Najaf and Ḥayy, where the party felt firm ground under its feet, had been summoned on December 9 to take more resolute measures of struggle in the hope of beating down the government.[20] The party would have, however, been contented if nūrī as-Sa'īd was merely kept occupied or, more accurately, as the Central Committee subsequently intimated, if his hand was stayed and "the plotting against Syria" abandoned.[21] A special statement, put out by the party on December 11, made plain that the perils looming on the Arab horizon were uppermost on its mind. While acclaiming the issue of the aggression at Suez as "a historic victory of the Arab liberation movement," and averring that that movement was "not an accidental manifestation or a temporary policy of one of the governments but an important fact of modern history . . . and a force which is impossible to overcome," the party warned that "the battle of Arabism" was not yet at an end. Defeated at Suez, the imperialists had now, with a view to "segregating Egypt," shifted their attention to Syria and Jordan–where nationalist, pro-Nāṣir, and Communist-backed governments held office-and would "undoubtedly return to the attack with greater cunning and in unknown ways." Simultaneously, the

party admitted that, in its forecast of the previous September, it had underestimated "the aggressiveness of the enemy" and that the onslaught of events had since conclusively refuted the perspective of "a predominantly peaceful" struggle and now clearly imposed "a predominantly violent" line of march.[22]

In the light of the new directives, the Ḥayy Party Committee, which had been initiating strikes and demonstrations since December 2, proceeded to steer a course toward an armed uprising. Its leader, ʻAlī ash-Shaikh Ḥmūd, a local bookseller, was very sure of his ground. Much of Ḥayy was on his side. The explanation is not far to seek. Economically speaking, the town was in a blind alley. It was literally unable to expand, being surrounded on all sides by the villages of Shaikh ʻAbdallah Muḥammad Āl-Yāsīn, the paramount chief of the Mayyāḥ section of Banī Rabīʻah. Shaikh ʻAbdallah was, as all Iraq knew, a callous and ruthless man. Back in September 1920, being apparently worried about his influence as a landholder and a tribal chieftain, he was responsible, as the British political officer of the Muntafiq Division duly noted, for the murder of his elder brother, Abd-ul-Muhsin.[23] In his administrative report for 1921, the same officer described Shaikh ʻAbdallah and his younger brother Balāsim in these words: "The sons of Muḥammad Āl-Yāsīn, ʻAbdallah and Balāsim, are notoriously bad in every sense of the word. . . . They have no backing in Ḥayy neither in the district nor in the town. All loathe them, but fear them more."[24] By 1956 the two brothers had managed, by one way or another and with the help of the government, to gain title to 270,341 dūnums,[25] that is, to more than one-third of all the cultivable lands in the district of Ḥayy. The town, in consequence, suffered a great deal. It had even difficulty finding ground to bury its dead. ʻAbd-ul-Karīm al-Uzrī, a minister of finance under the monarchy, related to this writer how he had at one time attempted to persuade Shaikh ʻAbdallah to part, in the public interest, with ten square kilometers of his land, only to meet with the exasperating retort: "If you take ten square kilometers today, you will take one hundred tomorrow. What will remain of our property?"[26] In brief, at the time of the events under study, the shadow of the shaikh lay, as could well be imagined, like a curse on Ḥayy and its unfortunate inhabitants.

The accumulating embitterment was bound to break to the surface. All that the Local Party Committee had to do was just to touch the match to the

fuse. Already by December 6, before the receipt of the new party directives and in part as a reflex to the excitement raging in Najaf, an extremely tense atmosphere permeated the whole of Ḥayy. “Communism,” wrote the local Special Branch officer on that day, “has penetrated among all classes and the people have grown so reckless that they no longer show any regard for the government or pay any attention to the law. . . .” In the following days, as popular discontent took on increasingly more active forms, appeals went out for the speedy despatch of police reinforcements. On December 17, and apparently in response to instructions delivered by Fawzī Mahdī al-Aḥmar, a lawyer and a liaison officer of the Provincial Party Committee at Kūt, the agitation reached the point of armed revolt. Telephone lines with Baghdād were cut off and, according to a police telegram, men of the people, armed with rifles and machine guns (?) and supported by firing from the windows and roofs of houses, forced police patrols to withdraw from several parts of the town and, pouring forth, attempted to reach the Sarāy, the seat of the local government, but were in the end driven back. The market area, however, fell completely into their hands. Revolutionary committees and “people’s guards” at once sprang into life and proceeded to organize resistance and erect barricades at key points. A Communist party statement, published in Baghdād four days later, maintained that the barricaded area was still under siege by a strongly reinforced police, but the chief of police of Kūt province reported that the forces under him charged through the area and dispersed its defendants on the afternoon of December 18, and that by the evening the town had been wholly subdued. One policeman was killed and seven others were wounded. The number of victims among the people is not known. On 21 December, ‘AIī ash-Shaikh Ḥmūd, the secretary of the Ḥayy Party Committee, and ‘Aṭā Mahdī ad-Dabbās, a basic collaborator, were arrested. On the following 10 January, the two men died on gallows planted in the public square.[27]

The uprisings of 1956 demonstrated beyond dispute that popular action, however serious and determined, mounted against the government in provincial towns–even in a city as sensitive as Najaf–could never be decisive. Deadly blows could only be struck at Baghdād, but here too a real triumph over the government in street struggle had become extremely difficult. The police had gained in experience and in equipment. It had also carefully studied the layout of the capital and drawn plans to meet all sorts

of contingencies. At the first physical signs of trouble, specially trained forces went into action, blocked roads selected beforehand, occupied tactical rooftops, and tried and often succeeded in breaking up demonstrations before they had even time to form. In 1956 the party simply could not organize any sustained large-scale action against the government in Baghdād.

Nūrī as-Saʻīd rode out the storm. If the Communists and other opposition parties succeeded in staying his hand from Syria, they failed to shake him down. On the other hand, Nūrī as-Saʻīd was now less firmly in the saddle than ever before, due in large measure to the discomfiture at Suez of the English–his only genuine point of support. The joining of the Military Committee of the Baghdād Pact by the United States in March 1957 did little to bolster him. The "Eisenhower Doctrine" adopted in the preceding January, after loud references to a so-called vacuum in the Middle East, gave less aid and comfort to Nurī than to the Communists. Although the doctrine purported to be concerned with countering possible "overt armed aggression" from countries "controlled by international communism," few nationalists disagreed with the comment that it drew from *Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb*, the principal organ of the Communist party. "The main aim of the Eisenhower Doctrine," the paper maintained, "is to put an end to the Arab liberation movement under the guise of combating the 'Communist danger.' " "They speak of a 'Communist danger,' " the paper went on to say, "but the thousands killed in Port Saʻīd, Sinai, and Palestine were not killed by Soviet arms. The arms with which the Arabs defended their home and dignity were Soviet arms."[28]

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THE FORMATION OF THE SUPREME NATIONAL COMMITTEE, FEBRUARY 1957

In the mid-fifties, communism gained ground in several parts of the Arab East. In Jordan, in the elections of 1956–the freest ever held-the Communist-led National Front polled 51,398 votes, that is, 12.7 percent of the total; the Moslem Brethren secured only 22,518; the Ba‘th 34,220; and the largest but the most incidental of the parties, the National Socialists, 72,467 votes.[1] In Syria, Khālid Bakdāsh, now a member of Parliament, had never as in this period enjoyed so much consequence among wide sections of the working people and could count on support even in the Army Command Congress, the nucleus of real immediate power. In Egypt, Marxists of all colorings were released from jail en masse, and not a few of them advanced to the forefront in the radio, press, theatre, and publishing fields. In Iraq, the Communists at long last broke their isolation and formally joined hands with the National Democrats, the Ba‘th, and the Independence party.

The coalescence of the Iraqi opposition was only to be expected. Practical, ideological, and temperamental obstacles had dissolved under the red-hot pressure of that swift series of breath-taking events that lay at the base of the rising trend toward the Communists: the Baghdād Pact, the Soviet-Egyptian arms agreement, the withdrawal of the Aswan Dam aid, the nationalization of the Suez Canal, and the tripartite attack on Egypt. Of course, the new Communist attitudes induced by these events–the abandonment of left sectarianism, the Arabization of the party’s point of view, and its more supple tactics generally–helped to no little degree in smoothing things over.

The question of a united front was not raised from the Communist side in a serious manner until late April 1955, that is, until a few weeks after England's adherence to the Baghdād Pact. At that time the party center commissioned 'Azīz ash-Shaikh, a member of the cadre,[2] to sound out the feeling of the other groups.[3] Ash-Shaikh first approached, through a third party, Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, the leader of the National Democrats, who did not prove unresponsive. But Chādirchī knew precisely where he stood, and on June 3, in notes jotted on a piece of paper, spelled out the indispensable conditions that he felt would open the road to a genuine alliance.[4] "The various elements of the Left, however moderate their program, will be tagged as Communists . . . and fought savagely on that basis, if they will unite only among themselves," Chādirchī maintained. They had also, therefore, to confederate with "independent national elements and others." Moreover, Chādirchī added, there could be no chance of success for a front if "some elements of the Left" did not abandon "the idea of bossing others" or adhere steadily and "in complete faith" to an "unprovocative" course. Effective guarantees had to be provided to quiet the fears of prospective partners that they might be utilized or thrust "into situations or battles that they had not envisaged or agreed to beforehand." The policy of "confronting others with an accomplished fact" could not be admitted "under any circumstances." The fabrication of charges or the indiscriminate heaping of abuse, in the event of differences of opinion, had to be avoided at all costs. Every side to the front had to be reassured that it would not be regarded as merely "incidental" to the movement but as an authentic part of it "without limitation of time": "in clearer terms, there should be absolutely no bringing up of the question of 'the historical stage,' which some reiterate in season and out of season." Finally, efforts had to be applied to the end of dissipating the prevalent "erroneous impression" that the leftists or progressives did not care for Arab nationalism. What had to be made clear to all was that the leftists or progressives conceded nothing to others in the genuineness of their feeling for the nation, but that they were nationalists without being chauvinists. The clarification of this point would, Chādirchī suggested, facilitate the attraction into the movement of elements identified as "nationalists" and whom it would be undesirable to ignore.

Chādirchī obviously demanded much, and very nearly the impossible, in at least one regard–the effective and not only nominal divorce of the

alliance from any “limitation of time.” After all, alliances of every kind–those in which the Communists enter and those in which the Communists do not enter–are by their essence transitional, inasmuch as they are always predicated on conditions which by the very nature of things will not endure.

The Communist party was, however, willing to oblige, but not completely at once. “We, the Communists,” declared its new Central Committee in a resolution circulated in August but adopted at a meeting held in July,

> must be conscious of a special responsibility, a fraternal responsibility, in the national movement. We must sincerely respect the opinions of others, even if they be opposed to our own. Reiterating the phrase: “We are alone in the field,” which has so often been affirmed in pride and vanity is wrong . . . and reflects an unreal estimate on our part of the other national forces. . . . Revolutionary leadership, the leadership of the working class, never means browbeating [confederates], or placing them in a tight spot but strengthening them in a spirit of tolerance, watchfulness, and self-sacrifice. . . . The strife in regard as to who will lead the national movement must change into a struggle for showing the necessary leadership ability. The masses will deliver their standard to the men who, in their settled belief, are fit to lead them.[5]

Simultaneously, the party began facing in a pan-Arab direction[6] and would have no doubt gone farther and come down to particulars had the Ba‘th and the Independents not held back cautiously, and Chādirchī and his group not shown reluctance to enter alone into the hoped-for front.

The historic Soviet-Egyptian arms agreement brought renewed Communist offers for common action. “Cooperation between the national forces is possible and indispensable,” read a statement issued by the Central Committee on November 13, 1955. More than that, it was worthwhile to come to an agreement “even with those who oppose only one aspect of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd’s policy.” “We do not have the slightest inclination,” the Central Committee concluded reassuringly, “to impose our political program on any one.”[7]

The appeal was not without effect. The contemporary edging of the Syrian Ba‘th toward the Syrian Communists also helped. In December, the First Congress of the Ba‘th of Iraq expressed itself in favor of starting a dialogue with the other “national parties,” and instructed its leaders to spare no effort to clear the path to a coalition. A series of contacts ensued, with the National Democrats serving as the connecting link between the Communists and the other groups. The only tangible result, however, was the forming toward the end of 1955 of a “broad and open committee of educated youth,” representing every shade of the left and nationalist opposition. The committee did little more than propagandize for the official licencing of a new party, the Congress party, in which the Independents and National Democrats had just fused. Even in this respect its efforts came to nothing: the desired licence was definitively denied on 16 June 1956. After that each party seemed to lapse back onto its own separate road.[8]

The months of acute tension that came in the wake of the nationalization of the Suez Canal argued powerfully in favor of the movement for a front, but the Independents, unable to overcome their qualms about mixing themselves up with the Communists, still dragged their heels.

The Communists attempted persuasion. “The National Front,” declared their Central Committee in a report approved by the Second Party Conference held in September 1956, “poses itself today as a historic necessity. . . . The defeat of the common enemy is a difficult task that no party can accomplish single-handed.” “Some are of the opinion,” the committee went on to say,

> that our National Front policy is nothing more than a concealed plot and that the object aimed at is merely to “utilize” or “exploit” the national forces in the battle of national liberation and then abandon them half-way and proceed without them or even against them toward socialism. ... In support of this opinion they invoke the experience of the Soviet Union and of other countries that traveled their own special road . . . under compelling circumstances. ... It is indeed a matter for regret that some of the beginners in our party . . . behave toward the national forces under the influence of this erroneous concept. . . . The radical changes that have taken place in the international situation deny the necessity of applying the Soviet experience or its like in our

> country. Moreover, the practice of modern China . . . refutes the "half-way" theory or the idea of "utilizing" or "exploiting" others. The democratic organizations and parties that made common cause with the Chinese Communist party in the War of Liberation are still moving hand in hand with it along the road to socialism. . . . Today as the bright horizons of socialism unfold before the liberation movements, the national forces in our country will not be in need at any time of a "permit" to travel the last half of the road. The path is open all the way to all men who are sincere, far-sighted, and ready to keep pace with the movement of life and persevere in serving the cause of the people. . . . Upon us and all the national forces ... devolves the task of raising the slogan "Together to the End of the Road."[9]

To give further proof of its moderate cast of thought, the Central Committee recognized, as Fahd had done in his days, that "in the present circumstances" the existing Iraqi constitution could, "in spite of its defects," serve as "a basis for bringing about changes in the interests of the people."[10]

These reconciliatory statements–admittedly inspired by the favorable attitude taken by the Twentieth Congress of the Communist party of the Soviet Union with regard to the "national bourgeoisie" of dependent countries-may have weighed, at least to a degree, with the other parties; but what eventually swept aside all hesitations was the tripartite attack on Egypt. On the very day of the Anglo-French ultimatum-October 30, 1956–a joint "Field Command," embracing representatives from every element of the opposition–except for the United Democratic party of Kurdistan[11]–and empowered to lead the active struggle against the government, came into being. That same night, however, all its members were arrested. The violence-studded risings that gripped various parts of Iraq in the months of November and December lacked, in consequence, the coordination they sorely needed.

But, if interrupted, the process of unification could not for long be held in check. The imposition of martial law and the heightened weight of Nūrī as-Sa'īd's authoritarianism gave it only added momentum. And so, in the last week of February of 1957, there was finally brought into birth the Front of National Union, with a mild five-point program calling for the removal of

the government of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd; the withdrawal of Iraq from the Baghdād Pact and the bringing of its policies into accord with the trend in the liberated Arab countries; the combating of imperialist encroachments and the pursuit of positive neutralism; the unleashing of democratic and constitutional freedoms; and, lastly, the abolition of martial law, the release of political prisoners, and the reinstatement of students, teachers, and employees expelled for political reasons. The program, which advisedly did not refer in an overt or covert manner to the institution of the monarchy, came from the secret printing press of the Iraqi Communist party on 9 March 1957, and was distributed throughout the country.

The central rallying point of the new front was the Supreme National Committee, a body of four men: Muḥammad Ḥadīd, an industrial executive and the deputy leader of the National Democrats;[12] Fū’ād ar-Rikābī, an engineer and the secretary of the Ba‘th party; Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, a middling merchant and the leader of the Independents; and ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh, an ex-schoolteacher and a candidate member of the Central Committee of the Communist party. After the arrest of ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh in January 1958, Kamāl ‘Umar Naḍhmī, a Communist lawyer and the son of an ex-minister of the interior, substituted for him. Both acted in the light of instructions transmitted to them in writing or by word of mouth from the party center.

The Supreme National Committee functioned on the basis of the unanimity principle, and implemented its decisions through a Central Organizational Committee and a network of inferior provincial and branch committees. Of course, the dividing line between the front and its constituent parties was never effaced, and to the end the front remained no more than a collection of diverse detachments.

Even so, it succeeded not only in unifying the behavior of the parties, but also in inspiring a similar process among the oppositional army elements, and building a link with their directing nucleus, the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers.[13]

It would not perhaps be going too far to say, therefore, that the front marked a qualitative change in the political situation. It at least polarized Iraqi society more than ever before, and to a point of genuine threat to the structure of the monarchy.

41

THE FREE OFFICERS, THE COMMUNISTS, AND THE JULY 1958 REVOLUTION

"Akram Ḥūrānī of the Ba'th Party," wrote a secret agent of the Iraqi government from Damascus in 1957, "greeted me the other day with the question: 'Ismā'īl! Have you in Iraq no hornets yielding honey?' 'Is there no hope in the army?' I asked back. 'There is hope in the army of Ibn Sa'ūd and there is no hope in your army?!' he answered."[1]

Few of the discontented elements in Iraq would have shared Ḥūrānī's optimism. Only a handful of opposition leaders had an inkling of what was taking place. To the others the army seemed politically numb, and the current opinion was that its officers had been bought off with promotions, fat salaries, grants of land, and other privileges. Even Nūrī as-Sa'īd was disposed to dismiss lightly the possibility of a threat from that direction, though he made sure to keep the powerful units out of Baghdād and without ammunition for their weapons. His allies seemed no less confident. "The army officers," a sensitively placed Western diplomat told this writer a few weeks before the July Revolution, "are far better paid than in Iran or Turkey. The crown prince keeps well in touch with them, and on Army Day gave out from his own land for the building of their homes." "There is some nationalism among junior officers," he went on to say, "but no real gripes. They are not heavily infiltrated by political parties nor are there any cliques, as in Farūq's army." "It is nothing like Egypt," he concluded.

In fact, the strong feelings that simmered in the depths of the people, simmered also in the depths of the army. It is not difficult to discover the reasons. The army had since 1935 rested largely on universal conscription, and tended on that account to mirror the society in all its various layers, and was bound eventually to reflect its basic passions and antagonisms. More than that, unlike other state institutions such as the Parliament or the

Cabinet, which were enclaves of privilege, the bulk of the officer corps was drawn from the poor and middle classes. This was in part the result of a situation inherited from Ottoman times, and in part the logical consequence of the crown's alliance in the twenties with the ex-Sharīfian officers who, in their overwhelming number, came from very humble families. The discomforts of army life were also too repelling for the dainty young men of the upper urban classes. The monarchy, from its earliest years, went out of its way to attract to the military academy the sons of tribal shaikhs, but many of them were unlettered or lacked the patience for the mechanics of training, or could not easily adapt themselves to the strenuous discipline of a military career.

But if the mass of the officers did not differ much in class origin from the discontented elements of the people, they were, on the other hand, far from representative of the various sectors of society to which these elements belonged. The officer corps, it must be remembered, was predominantly Arab Sunnī in composition. From the time of the Barzānī Rebellion, that is, from the middle forties, fewer and fewer Kurds had been admitted into the Staff College. Moreover, the Arab Shī'īs–the majority of the people of Iraq–were only very thinly represented in the ranks of staff major and above.

All the same, many of the Arab Sunnī officers shared, to a lesser or greater degree, the popular discontent, especially those who descended from families that were in a lowly condition and that had not long been established in Baghdād, or who hailed from small provincial towns such as 'Ānah or Takrīt, whose old local economies and old social structures had been disrupted by the flow of European industrial goods or under the impact of the new communications.[2] Some of these provincial town officers tended, it is true, to be narrow in their horizons or inclined toward sectarianism or localism: such men could theoretically commit themselves to as wide a view as pan-Arabism, but in practical matters would relapse into an excessive clannishness. Even so, they shared not a few of the sensibilities of the people at large. The military environment and military training of the men of the army had not, after all, sealed them off from the political currents around them. The military system was not, it must be remembered, very old in Iraq, nor was it set about with traditions. The officers had not yet lost the Iraqi impulse to dissent, nor had they become thoroughly imbued with the sense of obedience or the spirit of discipline.

Nor was conformity or an apolitical trend encouraged by the contemporary examples of Syria and Egypt, or the direct interference of the army in Iraqi political life in 1936-1941, or the use of the troops by the government in 1952 in Baghdād and in 1956 in Najaf as an adjunct of the police and a means for the repression of popular protest.

In respect to the greater part of the group that ultimately organized themselves as the Free Officers, the moods of revolt did not arise in a sudden manner or from a single event, but accumulated slowly and gradually. However, in the days of the collapse of the military movement of 1941, not a few of the younger officers began to turn away, perhaps irretrievably, from the monarchy, which by linking its destiny in that fateful year with the fortunes of the English had, in their eyes, vitiated itself as a symbol of the nation.

The subsequent execution of the leaders of the movement, the forced retirement of many of the officers, the reinstitution of British military advisers, and the breakup of much of the army–the army had, by the summer of 1943, lost nearly three-fourths of the 44,217 men that it counted in its ranks at the beginning of 1941[3]–spurred on the process of disaffection. The partial rehabilitation of the military system after 1944-the greater rigor in recruitment and training, the repair of camps and barracks, and the reequipment of the units from old British stocks-did not mollify feelings.

The war in Palestine, the feeble conduct of the campaign, the strange inactivity of the troops in the months of October-December 1948, when Egyptians and Israelis were locked in crucial combat, and the insistently rumored secret contacts of Jordan's king, ʻAbdullah bin Ḥusain, with Zionist leaders, left more and more officers with fewer and fewer illusions about the ruling Hashemite family.

The soaring prices and the lack of necessities in that decade could also not fail to disturb deeply the daily lives of the military class, fastened as it was to relatively stable money incomes. Except, perhaps, for the receivers of grants of land, it is doubtful, in view of the oil boom and another inflationary current, whether the bulk of the officers reattained or surpassed before the July Revolution the pre-1939 level of living of their class, despite all the solicitude lavished upon them from the middle fifties on (consult

accompanying Table 41-1), and even though they now lived better than most of the salaried people in the society.

The spirit of opposition increased when, in 1955, in utter indifference to public feeling, Nūrī as-Sa‘īd sponsored the Baghdād Pact and in the process, while closely tying the country to Western policies, unwittingly isolated it from the rest of the Arab world. The modern arms which the Egyptians now received from the Soviet Union, in impressive quantities when compared with the little that was of real worth that Nūrī obtained from his allies, could not but have raised doubts as to whether the course he pursued was to the best interests of the army. The attack upon Egypt in the autumn of 1956 by the English in league with the Israelis put Nūrī and the regime he epitomized further out of countenance.

The “union” with Jordan in 1958-the Hashemites’ reply to the founding of the United Arab Republic-only added to the resentment. It looked then as if Iraq was merely being saddled with the thankless burden of financially shoring up the Jordanian army to the narrow advantage of an unpopular dynasty.

The Free Officers had by this time become settled in the conviction that an irreconcilable conflict existed between the monarchy and the needs of Iraq–or, more accurately, their conception of these needs–and now simply waited for the opportune moment to strike their blow.[4]

But who were the Free Officers? When did they come to life? Who led their way? What concrete organizational form did their movement acquire? How widely did they ramify? To what aims did they bind themselves? How homogeneous were they in outlook and in interests? It is indispensable to answer these questions, if only to render more intelligible the veerings and vicissitudes of the Revolution of 1958.

Comparatively little of objective value has up to now been published about the Free Officers. The basic sources for their history are rare. One account-that which appeared in the Egyptian periodical *Rose al-Yūsef* in 1966 under the title of “The Memoirs of ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref”[5]–is very unsatisfactory. For one thing, it is factually skinny, and here and there vague or inaccurate. For another thing, it consists of various undifferentiated layers: passages dictated by ‘Āref himself, passages drawn by the editor from some of ‘Āref’s personal papers, more or less obvious journalistic

touchings-up, and, to fill gaps, a weaving in of material derived from "other sources."[6] There is also an unmistakable tendency to build up the role of ʻĀref and detract from that of ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim and–by implication–of other members of the movement.

A more reliable and more substantial account was published in 1968 by Retired Colonel Ṣabīḥ ʻAlī Ghālib, a member of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers.[7] But it must be noted that its author was in London in 1952 when the movement was started, and remained there until 1955 and, though subsequently elected to the committee, ceased to have direct and continuous contact with it after his transfer in late 1956 from the Directorate of Military Training at the Ministry of Defence to the Fourteenth Infantry Brigade at Nāṣiriyyah.

TABLE 41-1

Monthly Pay of Commissioned Officers (in dīnārs)[a]

							Pay in 1947					Pay in 1958[7] before the Revolution of July 14						
Class	*Rank*	*Corresponding English rank*	*Ottoman army pay*[1]	*Pay in 1922*[2,b]	*Pay in 1933*[3]	*Pay in 1939*[4,c]	*Basic pay*[5,d]	*Servant allowance*[5]	*High cost of living allowance*[6,e]	*Total pay*[e]	*Increase over 1939*[f]	*Basic pay*[g]	*Servant allowance*	*Military clothing allowance*	*Housing allowance*[h]	*High cost of living allowance*[e]	*Total pay*[e]	*Increase over 1939*[i]
'Umarā' (generals)	Mushīr	Field marshal		–	–	100	120	5	24	149	49%	180	8	5	27	36	256	156%
	ʻAmīd	General		150	–	85	100	5	24	129	51.8%	160	8	5	24	36	233	174.1%
	Farīq awwal[j]	First general[j]		112/500	–	–	–	–	–	–								
	Farīq	Lieutenant general		90	75	75	90	5	24	119	58.7%	140	8	5	21	36	210	180%
	'Amīr liwā'	Major general		–	65	65	75	5	24	104	60.0%	120	8	5	18	36	187	187.7%
Qādah (field officers)	Zaʻīm	Brigadier	28/125	63/750	50	50	60	5	18	83	66.0%	100	8	5	15	27	155	210%
	ʻAqīd	Colonel	23/438	48/750	42	42	48	5	15	68	61.9%	85	8	5	12/750	25	135/750	223.2%
	Muqaddam	Lieutenant colonel	18/750	41/250	36	36	40	5	14/500	59/500	65.3%	65	8	5	9/750	24	111/750	210.4%
A'wān ("aides")	Ra'īs awwal	Major	12/188	33/750	30	30	35	3	14	52	73.3%	55	5	5	8/250	23	96/250	220.8%
	Ra'īs	Captain	9/844	30	26	26	30	3	13/500	46/500	78.8%	45	5	5	6/750	22/500	84/250	224.1%
	Mulāzim awwal	First lieutenant	7/500	22/500	21	21	25	3	13	41	95.2%	35	5	5	5/250	20/500	70/750	236.9%
	Mulāzim thānī	Second lieutenant	6/523	18/750	17	17	20	3	12/500	35/500	108.8%	27	5	5	4/050	19	60/050	253.2%

[a]1 dīnār = 1000 fils = £1.

[b]Converted from rupees at rate of 1 rupee = 75 fils.

[c]An officer could receive an additional 25 dīnārs monthly if appointed as chief of staff, and 10 dīnārs if appointed to the command of a division and holding the rank of major general, and 13 dīnārs if holding the rank of brigadier or colonel.

[d]Plus a maximum of 15 dīnārs monthly for officers appointed as chief of staff; plus a possible 14 dīnārs for *umarā'* and 9 dīnārs for *qādah* if in the air force.

[e]These figures are for persons married, with more than one child. The singles or married with one child received, as a rule, smaller allowances.

[f]Rise in same period of general cost of living index for unskilled laborers, 501.4%. Iraq, Ministry of Economics, Principal Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract 1947*, p. 239.

[g]Additional amounts granted to officers occupying posts of chief of staff, commanders of corps or divisions, etc.; officers serving in the air force received 5 dīnārs more than the rates shown.

[h]15 percent of basic pay granted unless officer occupied a government-owned house.

[i]Rise in same period of general cost of living index for unskilled laborers, 435.8%. *Statistical Abstract 1958*, p. 124.

[j]This rank was in use only in 1920s.

Sources:

[1]*Al-Waqāi‘ al-‘Irāqiyyah* (Official Gazette) No. 1580 of 7 July 1937.

[2]*Iraq Year Book*, 1922, p. 69.

[3]Law of Iraqi Army Officers' Service No. 52 of (11 July) 1933, published in *Iraqi Official Guidebook for 1936* (in Arabic), pp. 435-440.

[4]Law of Iraqi Army Officers' Service No. 31 of 1937, published in *Al-Waqāi‘ al-Irāqiyyah* No. 1579 of 3 July 1937.

[5]Law No. 24 of 1947 Amending Army Officers' Service Law No. 31 of 1937, in *Al-Waqāi‘ al-Irāqiyyah* No. 2494 of 15 July 1947.

[6]High Cost of Living Allowance Law No. 16 of 1942 *(Al-Waqāi‘* No. 2016 of 14 April 1942) as amended by Law No. 52 of 1942 *(Al-Waqāi'* No. 2061 of 24 November 1942); and Law No. 2 of 1944 *(Al-Waqāi‘* No. 2153 of 26 January 1944).

[7]Figures obtained from the Ministry of Economics in June 1958.

The brief statements made by members of the Supreme Committee or the Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers during the trial of ‘Āref in the months of December 1958-January 1959 form our only other published basic source.[8] Some of these statements are, to be sure, not free from reticence or deliberate evasion, or are distinctly guided by fealty or flattery to Qāsim and antipathy or even enmity to ‘Āref, and, in at least one instance,[9] deviate outright from the groundwork of fact. Others, however, appear to portray faithfully the events of the past and deserve closer consideration.

The paucity of published sources enhances the importance of a manuscript dating from 1959, but so far preserved in secrecy and comprising the reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, secretary of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers. If this work is, naturally enough, not devoid of a point of view–its author is a nationalist by inclination–or of a measure of retrospective appraisal, it appears nonetheless to be inspired by a conscientious regard for the facts. It has also the virtue of not being a portrait depicted for the public of the day or, to put

it more accurately, it does not give the impression of having been prepared with immediate publication in view. But it is necessary to point out that though many of the aspects of the history of the Free Officers emerge clearly from these reminiscences, others are only faintly glimpsed or remain shrouded in obscurity, and could not be brought fully to light on the strength of testimony by other witnesses, due to the death of some of the principal figures involved. It is pertinent to add that the present writer has been fortunate enough to read the manuscript in question in 1962, but has not felt it proper to reveal its contents earlier, inasmuch as they were still too intimately tied up with living events.

The real initiator of the Free Officers' movement was indubitably Engineer Major Rif'at al-Ḥājj Sirrī. It is also almost certain that it was with his close friend and companion-in-arms Engineer Major Rajab 'Abd-ul-Majīd that he first discussed the idea of spreading a network of secret cells in the armed forces.

Born in Baghdād in 1917 to an Arab Sunnī officer of the Ottoman army, Sirrī was, it appears, a man of very attractive qualities. According to his associates,[10] he was unassuming, simple in his habits, strongly attached to his family, free from the slightest shade of anything like malice, and reputedly one of the bravest officers of the Iraqi army. But he was so trustful, so ready to believe others, that he not infrequently placed himself and his comrades in jeopardy: this would one day cost him his life. He was also of an unyielding temper: once he reached an opinion, he became insensible to argument. But even with these faults, it was impossible not to like him. Indeed, many of the men and officers of the Engineering Corps held him in especial esteem.[11] Rajab 'Abd-ul-Majīd, who had been born in 'Ānah in 1921 to a sheep merchant from the Fā'ūr House of the Ruwalah tribe, was less popular than Sirrī, but more accommodating and, in general, more disposed to caution.

Like others of their class, Sirrī and 'Abd-ul-Majīd were of moderate means. It is not possible to be more precise in regard to the financial status of 'Abd-ul-Majīd. As to Sirrī, it is known that when he died he left his wife and children a house, some land, and a debt of fifty dīnārs[12] which he owed to a local trader.[13] On the other hand, Sirrī enjoyed a social standing higher

than that of many of his brother officers by virtue of his relationship to Jamīl al-Midfa‘ī, an ex-premier.[14]

In bent and feeling, both Sirrī and ‘Abd-ul-Majīd were distinctly pan-Arab, but Sirrī inclined more than ‘Abd-ul-Majīd to a conservative view of things. He was also full of Islamic principle. Nowhere is this better revealed than in his last farewell to his family. “I hope,” he wrote to his wife on September 19, 1959, on the eve of his execution for complicity in the Mosul Revolt,

> that my death will not cause you much pain. . . . This is God’s will (Say, only that will befall us which God has decreed for us).[15] . . . I hope also . . . that you will bring the children up to be upright and to believe in God, in the Holy Qur’ān, and in the faithfull Prophet and that you will nourish them on the love of their homeland and their people and on the doing of good to all.
>
> My children ... I ask of you to honor and obey your mother and to look after her in her old age . . . and to discharge your duty to your nation and all your Arab countries, including your Iraq.[16]

This Islamically embedded pan-Arabism was not a peculiarity of Rif‘at al-Ḥājj Sirrī, but formed the basic thought of many–though certainly not all–of his associates. It is even more powerfully expressed in the testament of Nāḍhim aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī, a prominent Free Officer and a sharer in Sirrī’s fate: “I beg your mercy, O God, O God of the Arabs, 0 God of Islam! I turn to you, O God, as a Moslem and as a believer in my nation and in my Arabism. ... I beg your forgiveness, 0 God and bear witness that there is no god but God and that religion is truth, and Arabism is truth, and the Qur’ān is truth, and Islam is truth!”[17]

This state of mind is very akin to that of the officers who constituted the backbone of the 1941 military movement. In the memoirs of Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, the leader of these officers, every ideological position consciously taken is backed by a Qur’ānic verse or a Prophetic tradition. In support of Arabism, his dominant passion, aṣ-Ṣabbāgh adduces, not altogether contextually, two sacred lines: “We have revealed it an Arabic Qur’ān perchance you may see reason,” and “You were the best nation sent unto the world.”[18]

In brief, it would appear that the military rebels of 1941 and the pan-Arab-oriented segment of the Free Officers were ideologically more or less of the same lineage. In other words they were, in at least this sense, an historical continuity. But it must be kept in mind that there was, as will become apparent in due course, not an inconsiderable number of Free Officers with other perspectives and other values.[19]

The idea of a blow by the army was in the early fifties in the air, so to say. It did not, therefore, occur to Rif‘at al-Ḥājj Sirrī alone. Quite the contrary: it came near the heart of many an officer. However, before 1952, when Sirrī and Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd organized their first secret cell, the idea was little more than a reverie, or an individual temptation, or a topic only vaguely and hushedly discussed. An isolated clandestine officers’ circle had, it is true, been formed in Baṣrah as far back as 1942,[20] but it was broken up and had no sequel. Of course, the Communists had been active in the army all along, but they progressed, principally, among the common soldiers and noncommissioned officers. The Ba‘th, for its part, did not come effectively into the picture until much later.

In taking the first practical step, Rif‘at al-Ḥājj Sirrī and Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd were clearly inspired by the coup which Gamāl ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir and his little group of Free Officers pulled against Farūq on 23 July 1952, and which marked the beginning of the modern Egyptian revolution. In his reminiscences, ‘Abd-ul-Majīd explicitly acknowledges the fact, and relates how one day in September, about two months after that event, at a meeting in Sirrī’s quarters at the engineering barracks in ar-Rashīd Camp, he and Sirrī agreed to start clandestine work, Sirrī in the Engineering Corps and ‘Abd-ul-Majīd among the mechanical and electrical engineering units. They also resolved on Sirrī’s insistence, and not without protest from ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, that the group of which Sirrī would become the center should remain distinct and unacquainted with the group that ‘Abd-ul-Majīd would form.

This is how the movement took birth. That it should have been led off by officer engineers rather than by officers from the other services could perhaps be attributed to a greater incidence among them of qualitative excellence and to their generally higher sensitivity to political developments.

Sirrī fell without delay to canvassing for support, but ‘Abd-ul-Majīd was ordered in October to England for training with the British army, and did not return to Baghdād until April of 1953. In the interval he enlisted only one recruit: Staff Major Ṣabīh ‘Alī Ghālib, the assistant to the military attaché at the Iraqi embassy in London. Although ‘Abd-ul-Majīd now took up the work in earnest, his advance was painfully slow, and in 1954, after a general increase of officers’ salaries, ceased altogether. However, in 1955, in the tense months that followed the signing of the Baghdād Pact and the Soviet Egyptian arms agreement, ‘Abd-ul-Majīd’s hopes revived. His rise in the same year to the post of commandant of the School of Aerial Crafts gave him an added leverage. The tide of enthusiasm called forth by the nationalization of the Suez Canal redounded also to his favor. By the end of the summer of 1956, he had organized four cells of Free Officers, one each at the Air force quarters and in the camps of ar-Rashīd, al-Washshāsh, and al-Musayyib.[21] He had in addition succeeded in winning over two high-ranking officers: Staff Colonel Nājī Ṭāleb, the commandant of the Senior Officers’ School, Baghdād; and Staff Colonel Muḥsin Ḥusain al-Ḥabīb, the commander of the Heavy Artillery Regiment at al-Washshāsh camp.[22]

Rif‘at al-Ḥājj Sirrī had in the meantime made deeper and wider gains: he had drawn into the movement, among others, Major Shakīb al-Faḍlī, commander–at quarters opposite the Riḥāb Palace–of the Support Squadron of the Hāshimī Cavalry Regiment of the Royal Guard Brigade; Lieutenant Colonel Ṣāliḥ ‘Abd-ul-Majīd as-Sāmarrā’ī, commander at ar-Rashīd camp of the Independent Tank Squadron, which comprised the then recently acquired 27 forty-ton Churchill tanks, the heaviest that the Iraqi army possessed; Lieutenant Colonel Waṣfī Ṭāher, the future aide-de-camp of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd; Staff Lieutenant Colonel Shāker Maḥmūd Shukrī, commander of an infantry battalion at Jalawlā’;[23] Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ismā‘īl aj-Janābī, commandant of the Engineering School; Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ismā‘īl al-‘Āref, the secretary of the chief of staff; Staff Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, assistant director of military operations at the Ministry of Defence; and Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, senior instructor at the Military Academy.[24]

If Sirrī outdistanced ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, he tended, on the other hand, to accept officers into his group without sufficient scrutiny. Word of his activities was bound sooner or later to reach the ears of the authorities.

Surely enough, one day in the late summer of 1956 he was summoned to the Ministry of Defence for a cross-examination. Staff Lieutenant General Rafīq ʻĀref, the chief of staff, told him at once that he knew of the plot's existence and true purpose, and held proof of his guilt, and ended by threatening to arraign him and his fellow conspirators before a military tribunal. But Sirrī protested that he was not in this thing at all, and that evidence must have been fashioned against him by enemies out of malice and for personal reasons. The chief of staff permitted himself to be persuaded, but took the precaution of transferring Sirrī to the inferior post of recruiting officer in the province of Kūt. He also demoted or exiled to missions abroad several of the other implicated officers.

Before his departure for Kūt, Sirrī confided to his friend ʻAbd-ul-Majīd that during the investigation the chief of staff referred to details which had been discussed at a meeting attended only by himself, Staff Colonel ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ismāʻīl al-ʻĀref, and Lieutenant Colonel Ṣāliḥ ʻAbd-ul-Majīd as-Sāmarrā'ī; and that he had reason to think that it was Ismāʻīl al-ʻĀref who betrayed him.[25] But others suspected Amīn, and still others as-Sāmarrā'ī. The government, for its part, reduced Amīn to a staff officer at the Directorate of Supply in the Ministry of Defence, and sent as-Sāmarrā'ī to Amman as assistant military attaché. Ismāʻīl al-ʻĀref was, on the other hand, ordered to the United States on an unspecified mission and, five months later, made the military attaché in Washington. This all but convicted him in the eyes of many a Free Officer, but could well have been intended as a sort of a blind to deflect attention from the real informer. After the Revolution, only as-Sāmarrā'ī was led to prison, and upon insufficient presumptive grounds. Ismāʻīl al-ʻĀref, a very close friend of ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, became a minister of education, and ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn a minister of social affairs. As-Sāmarrā'ī, however, was never brought to trial, and in 1959 broke prison and left Iraq. Sometime afterwards he settled in the village of Ḥalāt, thirty-five kilometers or so to the north of Beirut, Lebanon. Who of the three officers betrayed Rifʻat al-Ḥājj Sirrī in 1956 is still a mystery. ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim himself pressed the ex-chief of staff to disclose the identity of the traitor, but in vain. He either had no knowledge of him or else withheld his name from Qāsim. To the end he insisted that the crown prince did not let him in on the secret.[26]

The ex-chief of staff appears to have had some sympathy for the Free Officers. At least this is what he claimed after the Revolution. In the latter part of July of 1958, when in confinement at ar-Rashīd Camp, he related to ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, then the commandant of the camp, that one day in 1956 he was bidden to call at the Riḥāb Palace. On arrival, he found Bahjat ‘Aṭiyyah, the chief of the secret police, with Crown Prince ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh, who was out of humor and a prey to great excitement. Handing him a list containing the names of Sirrī, ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, and other prominent Free Officers, the prince reproached him with keeping an indifferent watch over the army. Although aware of what was really afoot, the chief of staff denied–always according to his own account–that there was any plot against the government, and convinced the prince that the thing was manufactured. He also urged that the police should not meddle in the affairs of the army, and assured the prince that he had nothing to fear from the officers, and that he personally vouched for their loyalty. On that the prince is said to have closed the case.[27]

The Free Officers movement was far from stifled. Only a part of Sirrī’s cells were broken up; those of ‘Abd-ul-Majīd remained intact. Some of their supporters, it is true, lost heart or succumbed to a mood of pessimism and drew back. But ‘Abd-ul-Majīd and the foremost officer in his group, Staff Colonel Nājī Ṭāleb, resolved to go forward, and succeeded in inducing three of Sirrī’s senior confederates to work in concert with them: Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, Staff Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, and Lieutenant Colonel Waṣfī Ṭāher.

Nothing gave the reviving movement greater strength than the tripartite invasion of Egypt in the autumn of 1956. The spirit of revolt rose sharply. Some of the officers could not conquer the shock to their emotions, and well-nigh embarked upon foolish ventures, but were subdued at the last moment by their more prudent colleagues. The defeat of the invasion and the further shaking of the already badly shaken prestige of the government steeled the Free Officers in their purpose. Their ranks now palpably increased. It was at this time that Colonel Ṭāher Yaḥya, a commander of an armored regiment at Jalawlā’ and a future premier of Iraq, lent the movement the weight of his support.

Before the end of 1956, cells had so multiplied that the Free Officers felt the need for a more regular form of relationship. After a series of contacts

and feelings-out, a Supreme Committee took shape, with Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd, Staff Colonel Nājī Ṭāleb, Staff Colonel ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, Staff Colonel Muḥsin Ḥusain al-Ḥabīb, Retired Colonel Ṭāher Yaḥya, Engineer Lieutenant Colonel Rajab ʻAbd-ul-Majīd, Staff Lieutenant Colonel ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Farḥān, Lieutenant Colonel Waṣfī Ṭāher, Staff Major Ṣabīḥ ʻAlī Ghalib, and Retired Air Major Muḥammad Sabʻ as members (for biographical and other details on these officers, see Table 41-2).

The committee assembled for the first time in all probability in December of that year, in the house of the Retired Air Major Muḥammad Sabʻ in al-Aʻḍhamiyyah district of Baghdād. At this meeting every member took an oath on the Qur'ān in these words:

> I swear by God, the noble Qur'ān, and my military honor: to serve my homeland with my brother officers who are taking part with me in liberating it from the imperialists and their henchmen and from the autocratic rule by which the Iraqi people is oppressed; to act without fear or hesitation in the interest of the people as my brothers, the Free Officers, will determine; and to guard the secrets of the Free Officers and protect them from harm in all conditions and circumstances, as God is my witness.[28]

Perhaps in regard to the orientation of the Free Officers, this oath scarcely carries the weight that one might be tempted to place on it. Nonetheless one could note in parenthesis the purely political character of the aspirations to which it gives voice. The attachment of the Committee to at least the forms of Islam is also quite clear and requires no explanation.

Before dispersing, the committee approved a notion by ʻAbd-ul-Majīd to regard Rifʻat al-Ḥājj Sirrī as one of its members. However, in view of the tight watch kept on him, Sirrī was never able to participate in its work.

At a meeting held a week or so later at the same place, the committee elected Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd, the foremost member in rank and seniority, as its chairman, and ʻAbd-ul-Majīd, now an engineer lieutenant colonel, as its secretary. It also adopted a body of rules which, in essence, ran as follows:

A. *Membership in the Free Officers Movement*

1. Membership is open *only* to officers of the army.

2. Membership is denied to officers whose loyalty to the homeland is in doubt or who are of questionable moral character.

3. No officer can be admitted to membership except with the recommendation of two of the Free Officers and the approval of the Supreme Committee.

4. Officers who are in the active units of the army will be preferred to others.

B. *The Organization of Cells*

1. Every cell should come under an organizer and consist of only four officers.

2. Every member of a cell has to organize a new cell.

3. A member of an original cell cannot accept any officer into his subsidiary cell except with the endorsement of the leader and one member of the original cell and the approval of the Supreme Committee.

4. The leader of a subsidiary cell should under no circumstances reveal to the members of this cell or to others the names of the members of his original cell.

C. *The Supreme Committee*

1. The Supreme Committee should consist of three cells and each of these cells of only four officers.

2. Every member of the Supreme Committee should be responsible for the organization of no more than three cells.

3. No one should be admitted into the cells of the Supreme Committee except with the consent of all the members of the Committee.

4. The Supreme Committee should form from among its members the following branch committees:

TABLE 41-2

The Supreme Committee of the Free Officers

Name and year co-opted into committee	*Rank and post on eve of 1958 revolution*	*Date and place of birth*
'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim (chairman), 1957	Staff brigadier; commander, 19th Infantry Brigade 3rd Division, Manṣūr camp[a]	1914, Baghdād; originally from Ṣuwairah
Muḥyī-d-Dīn 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd[b] (first deputy chairman), 1956	Staff brigadier; chief of staff, 4th Armored Division, Washshāsh camp[c]	1914, Baghdād
Nājī Ṭāleb (second deputy chairman), 1956	Staff brigadier; commander, 15th Infantry Brigade, 1st Division, Baṣrah	1917, Nāṣiriyyah; originally from Syria
Rajab 'Abd-ul-Majīd (secretary), 1956	Engineer colonel; commandant, School of Aerial Crafts	1921, 'Ānah
'Abd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, 1956	Staff colonel; commander, 14th Infantry Brigade, 1st Division, Nāṣiriyyah	1918; Baghdād
Muḥsin Ḥusain al-Ḥabīb, 1956	Staff colonel; commander, Heavy Artillery Regiment, Washshāsh camp[c]	1916; Shaṭrah
'Abd-us-Salām 'Āref, 1957	Staff colonel; commander, 3rd Battalion, 20th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Division, Jalawlā' camp[d]	1921, Baghdād; originally from neighborhood of Sumaichah, Ramādī Prov.

Ethnic origin and sect	*Class origin and father's occupation*	*Education*	*Subsequent history*
Arab father, Failī Kurdish mother; Sunnī (mother: Shī'ī)	Working class; carpenter-worker	Military Academy (1932-34), Staff College (1940-41); Senior Officers' School, Devizes, England (1950)	Prime minister, minister of defence, supreme commander of armed forces 14 July 1958 - 8 February 1963; executed 9 February 1963.
Arab; Sunnī	Military middle class; army brigadier	Military Academy (1935-36), Staff College (1941-43), Law School (1945-50), Senior Officers' School, Devizes (1953)	Commander, 4th Armored Division 14 July 1958 - 7 February 1959; minister of education 1959-60; minister of industries 1960-63; imprisoned 9 February - September 1963; now retired.
Arab; Shī'ī	Upper landed class; landowner, mayor of Nāṣiriyyah, member of Parliament	Military Academy (1936-38) British Military Academy (1938-39), Staff College, British Staff College, Camberley	Minister of social affairs 14 July 1958 - 7 February 1959; resigned; minister of industries, 9 February - 7 October 1963; minister of foreign affairs 1964-65; prime minister 9 August 1966 - 9 May 1967.
Arab; Sunnī	Middling commercial class; sheep merchant	School of Engineering (1936-39) Loughborough College, England (1947-51)	Director general, ministry of Development 2 August 1958 - 8 March 1959; retired; ambassador to Cairo November 1963 - August 1966; deputy prime minister and minister of interior 9 August 1966 - 9 May 1967.
Arab; Sunnī	Lower landed class; landowner	Military Academy, Staff College	Director, Military Operations July 14-18, 1958; Military attaché Cairo 1958-59; minister of social affairs 1959-60; resigned on account of illness, 22 October 1960.
Arab; Shī'ī	Lower landed class; landowner	Military Academy, Staff College	Commander of artillery, Washshāsh camp; retired March 1959; minister of communications June - November 1964; minister of defence 14 November 1964 - 2 September 1965; ambassador to Moscow 1965-1968.
Arab, Sunnī	Trading lower middle class; draper	Military Academy (1938-41), Staff College	Deputy prime minister, minister of interior, and deputy supreme commander of armed forces 14 July 1958; relieved of last-mentioned post 12 September and of other posts 30 September 1958; arrested 5 November; tried on charge of attempting to assassinate Qāsim and condemned to death; pardoned and released

Name and year co-opted into committee	*Rank and post on eve of 1958 revolution*	*Date and place of birth*
Ṭāher Yaḥya, 1956	Retired colonel; on retired list	1914, Baghdād; originally from Takrīt
'Abd-ur-Raḥmān 'Āref,[e] 1957	Colonel; commander, Faiṣal Armored Regiment, 6th Brigade, 4th Armored Division, Washshāsh camp[c]	1916, Baghdād; originally from neighborhood of Sumaichah, Ramādī Prov.
Rif'at al-Ḥājj Sirrī,[f] 1956	Retired engineer lieutenant colonel; on retired list	1917, Baghdād; originally from Ḥadīthah
'Abd-ul-Karīm Farḥān, 1956	Staff lieutenant colonel; commander, armored unit, Mafraq, Jordan	1919, Ṣuwairah
'Abd-ul-Wahhāb ash-Shawwāf, 1958	Staff lieutenant colonel; director, Training Division, Directorate of Military Training, Ministry of Defence	1916, Baghdād

Ethnic origin and sect	*Class origin and father's occupation*	*Education*	*Subsequent history*
			October 1962; president of Republic from 8 February 1963 till death in a helicopter crash 13 April 1966.
Arab; Sunnī	Trading lower middle class; *'alawjī* (grain tradesman)	Military Academy	Director general of police 14 July 1958 - 7 December 1958; retired; chief of staff 8 February 1963 - 18 December 1963; prime minister 20 November 1963 - 2 September 1965; member of Ba'th party 1963; retired; deputy prime minister 10 May - 10 July 1967; prime minister 10 July 1967 - 17 July 1968.
Arab; Sunnī	Trading lower middle class; draper	Military Academy (1936-37)	Commander, 6th Armored Brigade; commander Armored Corps; retired 21 August 1962; commander, 5th Division 8 February - 18 December 1963; acting chief of staff 18 December 1963 - 17 April 1966; president of Republic from 17 April 1966 and president and prime minister 9 May - 10 July 1967; president 10 July 1967 - 17 July 1968.
Arab; Sunnī	Military middle class; colonel	Military Academy (1937-39)	Director, Military Intelligence 14 July 1958 - 8 March 1959; arrested, imprisoned for implication in Mosul Revolt, March 1959; executed 20 September 1959.
Arab; Sunnī	Lower landed class; landowner	Military Academy (1939-42), Staff College, Law School	Commander armored regiment 1958-59; retired 1959; commander, 1st Division 9 February 1963 till arrest on 16 May; minister of orientation 20 November 1963 - 5 July 1965; resigned; implicated in abortive coup of 30 June 1966; arrested, released 1966; supporter of Movement of Arab Nationalists 1963; minister of agrarian reform 10 May 1967 - 6 July 1968.
Arab; Sunnī	Landed religious class of high income; son of a landowner and head of the *Shar'ī* (religious) Court of Cassation	Military Academy, Staff College, Senior Officers' School, Devizes	Commander of Mosul garrison 14 July 1958 to 8 March 1959, when he led revolt in that town and was killed.

Name and year co-opted into committee	*Rank and post on eve of 1958 revolution*	*Date and place of birth*
Waṣfī Ṭāher,[g] 1956	Lieutenant colonel; aide-de-camp of Nūrī as-Sa'īd	1918, Baghdād
Ṣabīḥ 'Alī Ghālib, 1956	Staff major; staff officer, HQrs 2nd Division, Kirkūk	1920, Baghdād
Muḥammad Sab', 1956	Retired air major; on retired list	1916, Baghdād

Ethnic origin and sect	*Class origin and father's occupation*	*Education*	*Subsequent history*
Arab father, Kurdish mother; Sunnī	Lower military middle class; army officer	Military Academy	Aide-de-camp of Qāsim 14 July 1958 - 8 February 1963; killed 9 February 1963.
Arab father, Turkish mother; Sunnī	Lower official middle class; court clerk	Military Academy (1939-42), Staff College (1949-50)	Military attaché, Ankara 14 July 1958 - 8 February 1963; retired.
Arab; Sunnī	Military middle class; army officer	Aviation school	Director of Aviation Association 1958-59; retired.

[a]A camp about 95 kilometers to the northeast of Baghdād.

[b]Chairman of committee before co-optation of Qāsim.

[c]A camp directly to the west of Baghdād.

[d]A camp about 140 kilometers to the northeast of Baghdād.

[e]A brother of 'Abd-us-Salām 'Āref.

[f]Sirrī, being closely watched, did not attend any of the meetings of the committee.

[g]A cousin of Zakī Khairī, member of Politbureau of Iraqi Communist party (1958-1962; 1964 to present); withdrew from committee in May 1958, but remained a Free Officer.

a) a *Military Committee* of three which will study the military situation and draw out the necessary plans for the carrying out of the revolution;

b) a *Political Economic Committee* of three which will take stock of the local and international political conditions and gather the important data that could help in the solution of political and economic problems that may arise at the time of the carrying out of the revolution;

c) a *Cooperative Committee* of three which will collect contributions from the Free Officers for the benefit of their brothers who may incur disadvantage.

5. All the members of the Supreme Committee will be responsible for procuring information on the enemies of the Free Officers and their strength

in the army and police and on the agents of foreign embassies and other servants of the imperialists and of the governing authorities.[29]

The rules are silent on one important point: except in regard to admission into the cells of the Supreme Committee (C.3 above), there is no indication as to whether the committee functioned on the basis of the majority or unanimity principle. In practice, deliberations would appear to have gone on until unanimity or near unanimity was reached. But at the decisive moment, as things turned out, it was the opinion of the commanders of the crucial units that really mattered.

It is not clear whether in formulating its rules the committee had drawn on the experience of other secret groups, that of the Free Officers of Egypt, for example. However, the structure that emerged bears certain resemblances to that of the Communist party. For one thing, it is as highly centralized. For another, it too rests ultimately on extremely small basic units–cells of four. This is a question not so much of direct influence, but of clandestineness observing its own natural manner of procedure. Besides, the organizational pattern of the Free Officers is less complex than that of the Communists: there are few intermediate organs between the Supreme Committee and the original cell. The explanation for this lies in the relatively small number of Free Officers: in 1957 there were only 172 Free Officers[30] and on the eve of the Revolution a little more than 200,[31] that is, less than 5 percent of the entire membership of the officer corps.

At the time of the organization of the Supreme Committee, the two officers destined to play the first role in the Revolution, Staff Brigadier ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, commander of the Nineteenth Infantry Brigade Third Division and Staff Colonel ʻAbd-us-Salām ʻĀref, commander of the Third Battalion Twentieth Infantry Brigade Third Division, were in Mafraq, Jordan. They had entered that country on 2 November 1956 after the tripartite attack on Egypt, but had been at “H3,” close to the frontiers, since September and did not return to their original position at al-Mansur[32] and Jalawla’[33] camps until 3 January 1957.

TABLE 41-3

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers

Rank on Eve of Revolution	No.
In active service	
Staff brigadiers	3
Staff colonels	3
Engineer colonel	1
Colonel	1
Staff lieutenant colonels	2
Lieutenant colonel	1
Staff major	1
On retired list	
Colonel	1
Engineer lieutenant colonel	1
Air major	1
Total	15

Ethnic Origin	No.
Arab	12
Arab-Kurd	2
Arab-Turk	1
Total	15

Place of Birth	No.
Baghdād	1
Middle-size provincial town	1
Small provincial town	3
Born in Baghdād but to a family of recent migrants from provincial district or small provincial town	5
Born in Baghdād but whose place of origin could not be determined	5
Total	15

Class Origin	No.
Classes in high income brackets	
Landed class	1
Religious landed class	1
Classes or strata in middle income brackets	
Middling military stratum	3
Middling commercial class	1
Classes or strata in lower middle income brackets	
Lower military middle class	1
Lower trading middle class	3
Lower landed class	3
Lower official middle class	1
Working class	1
Total	15

Age Group in 1958	No.
37-39 years	4
40-44 years	11
Total	15

Religion and Sect	No.
Moslem Sunnī	12
Moslem Shī'ī	2
Shī'ī-Sunnī	1
Total	15

Fate by 1970	No.
Killed or executed	4
Killed in air crash	1
Retired from service	10
Total	15

Both already belonged to a group of dissident officers that comprised, among others, Colonel ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, commander of the Faiṣal Armored Regiment at al-Washshāsh, and Staff Brigadier Nāḍhim aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī, commander at Jalawlā’ of the Twentieth Infantry Brigade Third Division. Later, Staff Brigadier ‘Azīz al-‘Uqailī, commander of the Fourth Infantry Brigade Second Division, Brigadier Fū’ād ‘Āref, commander at Ḥillah of the Ninth Infantry Brigade First Division, and Staff Colonel Khalīl Sa‘īd, commander at Kirkūk of the Third Infantry Brigade Second Division, would cast in their lot with them.[34]

Research fails to establish in a conclusive manner how this group originated. From “The Memoirs of ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref” as published in *Rose al-Yūsef* in 1966, it is possible to infer that the initiative pertained in an immediate sense to ‘Āref, and ultimately to Rif‘at al-Ḥājj Sirrī. In fact, in the memoirs the role of ‘Āref is placed on a level with that of Sirrī. In ‘Āref’s own words or, perhaps more accurately, in the words ascribed to ‘Āref: “One night in December of 1952 I met with the martyred Rif‘at al-

Ḥājj Sirrī . . . in the Officers' Club. . . . Our meeting had to do with the conditions in our country. . . . From the first instants there was a common realization that the decisive moment for revolutionary work was at hand."[35] And then at another point in the memoirs: "Among [the high-ranking officers who took up the organization of forces for the day of the Revolution] was ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim whom I first approached on the matter of participating with us . . . [in 1954 or 1955] when I served under him as a commander of one of the battalions of the Nineteenth Brigade." [36]

Whether these passages were dictated by ʻĀref himself or interposed by the editor of the memoirs remains uncertain, but they clearly do not harmonize with the account of a 1958 statement by Rifʻat al-Ḥājj Sirrī given in Volume V of the "Proceedings of the Special Supreme Military Tribunal."

> At the beginning of our activities . . . [runs the account] the Retired Colonel ʻAbd-us-Salām ʻĀref did not belong to our organizations but in 1956, to my belief, His Excellency Brigadier ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim first broached [the subject] with him. . . . This made us wonder, lacking confidence, as we did, in the Retired Colonel on account of his showing off and want of discretion. . . . I only met him about two months before the Revolution . . . and found then that he shared our feelings and the aims and policy of the Revolution. . . . I could not hide my surprise at this and told him that our impression of him had been very unfavorable.[37]

Of course, due attention must be given to the circumstances in which Sirrī made the statement: ʻĀref was under a cloud and standing trial for his life. Besides, a tampering with the statement could not altogether be ruled out. However, other testimonies offered in ʻĀref's interest were not altered. For instance, in answer to a question by the court as to ʻĀref's role in the Free Officers' movement before the Revolution, Staff Brigadier Nājī Ṭāleb affirmed that "the accused was one of the brothers who associated with us in this thing from beginning to end." [38] At first glance, this may seem to contradict Sirrī's statement, but the contradiction vanishes when account is taken of the fact that Nājī Ṭāleb was drawn into the movement only in

1956.[39] Moreover, Sirrī's statement has the ring of authenticity. The version in "The Memoirs of ʻAbd-us-Salām ʻĀref" may also be something in the nature of an attempt to remold ʻĀref's past or, at least, to push back the date when he first joined in with the Free Officers.

Be that as it may, and regardless of whether or not the group in question owed its origin directly to ʻĀref and ultimately to Sirrī, there is one point which is beyond dispute: in 1955, when the group began to make itself felt in the circles of the Free Officers, Qāsim stood at its head and guided it independently from the main movement. At the time it consisted of only a few commanding officers without any understructure of cells. This did not render Sirrī, who was still active, any the less eager to secure its support. With that end in view, he sent Major Shakīb al-Faḍlī, who had studied under Qāsim at the Military Academy back in 1939, to Qāsim's quarters in the camp of al-Manṣūr. Al-Faḍlī showed Qāsim all the cards, so to say. Qāsim, in turn, shared with him his inner thoughts. He too, he said, disapproved of the existing regime and had revolutionary plans of his own. He pledged to be in Baghdād with his brigade within five hours if Sirrī and his followers took any action, but felt justified to expect help from them should the opportunity arise for him to deliver a blow.[40]

Qāsim began now to cooperate closely with the main movement, but before very long–in the summer of 1956–he broke contact. He did this apparently in self-protection. The government had just found out about Sirrī's role. Later, it would be put about that Qāsim had had a hand in this event, and that the spur that urged him to betrayal was the desire to win the confidence of the authorities so that he could proceed with his own plans unhampered. The prospect of dominating the field by eliminating rivals was–it would also be suggested–a further temptation to him. But the tale is too lightly attested to carry conviction. It was first thrown out, and as a mere supposition, in 1959, when the strife between Qāsim and the nationalists was at its bitterest.[41] It reappeared seven years afterwards in "The Memoirs of ʻAbd-us-Salām ʻĀref," but this time as a full-grown fact.[42] It rests, it would seem, upon no other foundation than the personal friendship that tied Qāsim to Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ismāʻīl al-ʻĀref, one of the officers upon whom suspicion had fallen. Anyhow, in 1956 no scrap of a doubt appears to have attached to Qāsim. Otherwise it would be

difficult to explain how Sirrī's colleagues came in less than a year to entrust Qāsim with the leadership of their movement.

This occurred after Qāsim and his brigade had gone to and returned from Jordan. By that time the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers had been set up and had made no little headway. It had also in several sittings given thought to the best means by which it could prevail against the government, and had reached the conclusion that the focal point of its whole problem lay in winning over trustworthy commanders of powerful units. It was in pursuit of this line that in April 1957 or thereabouts it deputed Lieutenant Colonel Waṣfī Ṭāher, one of its members, to seek Qāsim and feel him out on the possibility of a union of efforts. Qāsim expressed readiness, and in May, after conferring at his house in ʻAlwiyyah, Baghdād, with Staff Brigadier Nājī Ṭāleb, another member of the committee, merged his group in the main movement.

A month later, Qāsim came to a meeting of the committee accompanied by Colonel ʻAbd-us-Salām ʻĀref. As no invitation had been extended to ʻĀref, nor had the matter of his membership been under consideration, his appearance came as a surprise. Qāsim read this in the glances of the members, and hastened to assure them that he had firm trust in ʻĀref. Whereupon both Qāsim and ʻĀref took the oath of fidelity on the Qur'ān, and were formally coopted into the committee. In deference to his rank and order of seniority, Qāsim was in the following July raised to the position of chairman. Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd, the previous presiding officer, became first deputy chairman, and Staff Brigadier Nājī Ṭāleb second deputy chairman. Engineer Colonel Rajab ʻAbd-ul-Majīd remained as secretary.[43]

Except for the withdrawal in May 1958 of Lieutenant Colonel Waṣfī Ṭāher and his replacement by Staff Lieutenant Colonel ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb ash-Shawwāf, the Supreme Committee would, from this point down to the eve of the Revolution, be composed as shown in Tables 41-2 and 41-3. From these tables it is plain enough that the members of the committee were, in their majority, Arab Sunnī Moslem colonels or lieutenant colonels of lower-middle-class origin, and born in provincial towns or in Baghdād, but to families of recent migrants from provincial towns.[44] They were also in their late thirties or early forties or, in other terms–to borrow a saying which old Ottoman Iraqis made current in the twenties–they belonged to the

generation of *Awlād-us-Suqūṭ*–"The Children of the Fall"–that is, they grew up after the fall of Baghdād (1917), when a taste developed for what to the generality of the people seemed then as the strange and wanton ways of Europe.[45] One other thing in regard to the composition of the committee is worth mentioning. All its members, with the exception of Qāsim, attended the military academy after 1934, and none before 1932. These are two important dates in the history of the academy. In 1932, direct British supervision came to an end. In 1934, the admission policy was changed: a secondary school education became a basic requirement. Qāsim himself had had training at the secondary level. But many of the top officers of the Iraqi army were only elementary school graduates. They also had been more exposed to the influence of British military instructors and advisers. These were factors that to a greater or lesser extent differentiated between them and most of the Free Officers, and undoubtedly made for a certain degree of psychological distance.

The winning over of Qāsim and his supporters was followed by a fresh accession of strength: in November 1957 a group of close to eighty junior officers joined the main movement. The group appears to have originally taken shape under the influence of Rif'at al-Ḥājj Sirrī, but at this time Staff Major 'Abd-us-Sattār 'Abd-ul-Laṭīf–who would years later play a key role in the destruction of Qāsim–functioned as its foremost spokesman. It had also a leading committee of nine which, by virtue of a decision of the Supreme Committee, was now transformed into a Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers (see Table 41-4), with the obvious task of continuing the struggle in the event of the failure of the Supreme Committee.

While, as a rule, the group in question would henceforth march in step with the Supreme Committee, it would not invariably offer it unquestioning obedience. Indeed, at one point–in late 1957–it would request that three of its members be allowed to attend the meetings of the committee, but the request would be denied. At another point–in mid-1958–perturbed by the apparent want of progress, it would threaten to break off relations with the committee. Basically it would feel that the committee practiced excessive caution. The committee, for its part, would think that the group, being youthful, was impatient, and that impatience was too perilous a mood to bring to conspiratorial undertakings. It is perhaps this mood that would help

to drive the group close to Colonel ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref, who forever inclined to bold courses, and who, having offered to serve as a connecting link between the group and the Supreme Committee, would act in that capacity from May 1958 onwards.

As the Free Officers grew in strength, the Communist party became alive to their importance, and had of necessity to take a stand toward them which, when ultimately defined, flowed, at least in part, from the particular view of the army in which it had educated its followers.

The party had always drawn a distinction between the army and the police. From its standpoint, policemen were simply hopeless. They were “against the people and with the government in everything.” This was a trait that adhered to them and from constant practice tended, insofar as they were concerned, to acquire much of the characteristic of a second nature. It was idle, therefore, to seek support in their midst. The army, on the other hand, was a more complex and heterogeneous social phenomenon. For one thing, it included in its ranks more conscripts than volunteers, and in general conscripts, torn as they were from their homes and families, cared as little for the army as for the government and were thus, in the opinion of the party, the most open to Communist persuasion. The volunteers had also to be differentiated. Many of them were soldier-craftsmen–carpenters, smiths, electricians, wireless operators, etc.–who had more of a proletarian than a military character and, being better educated than others, could more easily grasp the ideas of the Communists. The party did not wash its hands even of the professional fighters, for they too had difficult conditions of living which continually nourished in them the live seeds of disaffection. When it came to the officer corps, the party maintained that its middle and lower layers embraced many “noble patriots,” while its highest-ranking members ranged themselves unequivocally with “the enemies of the people.” To these formulations the party, however, attached a qualificative warning: there was need where the army was concerned of “a great deal of flexibility and political resourcefulness.”[46] Such were the general guidelines that inspired the party’s behavior down to the 1958 Revolution, and which the Communist cadre drew in 1954 on the basis of two decades of underground experience in the army.

TABLE 41-4

Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers

Name	*Rank and post on eve of 1958 revolution*	*Date and place of birth*	*Nation and sect*
Muḥammad Majīd	Staff lieutenant colonel; staff officer, Directorate of Military Operations	1921, Baghdād; originally from ʿĀnah	Arab, Sunnī
Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī	Staff major; staff officer, Directorate of Supplies	1926, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
Jāsim al-ʿAzzāwī	Staff major; staff officer, Directorate of Military Engineering and Works	1924, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
ʿAbd-us-Sattār ʿAbd-ul-Laṭīf	Staff major; staff officer, Directorate of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering	1926, al-Aʿẓhamiyyah	Arab, Sunnī
Ibrahīm Jāsim at-Takrītī	Staff major; instructor, Military Academy	1925, Takrīt	Arab, Sunnī
Ṣubḥī ʾAbd-ul-Ḥamīd	Staff major; instructor, Staff College	1924, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
Ḥasan Muṣṭafa an-Naqīb	Staff major; staff officer, Directorate of Military Operations	1925, Sāmarrāʾ	Arab, Sunnī
ʿĪsa ash-Shāwī	Staff major; instructor, Military Academy	1924, Takrīt	Arab, Sunnī
Ṭāha ad-Dūrī	Major;[d] inspector, Directorate of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering	? , Baghdād; originally from ad-Dūr	Arab, Sunnī

Class origin and father's occupation	*Political affiliation*	*Salient points in subsequent career*
Trading lower middle class; tradesman	Pro-Ḥarakiyyīn[a] 1964-1966	Director, Military Planning, February 1963; pensioned off, September 1965; arrested 30 June 1966 for participation in abortive coup; subsequently released.
Military middle class;[b] Ottoman army officer	Ba'thī since 1960	Commander, Al-Manṣūr Tank Regiment July 1958-March 1959; arrested March 1959; commander, 4th Tank Regiment July 1959-January 1963; commander Armored Corps and assistant chief of staff February-November 1963; retired, November 1963; Minister of Industry, 1968.
Trading lower middle class; dealer in wheat	Independent nationalist	Private secretary of minister of defence (Qāsim) July 1958-February 1963; retired February 1963; minister of agrarian reform, July 1968-July 1969.
Official lower middle class; civil official, Defence Ministry	Ba'thī from the mid-fifties; broke with party 1963	Staff officer, Supreme Command of Armed forces, July 1958-March 1959; retired 1959; arrested and imprisoned 1960-61; member of Ba'th Command and of the Revolutionary Council and Minister of Communications, 1963; minister of interior May 10-July 10, 1967.
Trading lower middle class; dealer in wood	Independent nationalist	Commander, tank regiment July 1958-March 1959; killed in fighting that attended Ba'thī coup of February 1963.
Military lower middle class; army officer	Pro-Ḥarakiyyīn[a] 1963-1967	Staff officer, Ministry of Defence 1958-1959; director, military operations, February-November 1963; minister of foreign affairs 1963-64; minister of interior 1964-65; participated in abortive coup of 30 June 1966.
Middle landowning *ashrāf*[c] class; landed marshal of *ashrāf* at Sāmarrā'	Ba'thī since 1960	Military attaché, Washington, 1958-60; commander, 1st Tank Regiment, February-November 1963; commander, 8th Infantry Brigade, 1967; commander, Iraqi troops in Jordan, 1968 to 1970.
Middle landowning shaikhly class; a chief of the tribe of 'Ubaid	Independent nationalist	Commander, Engineering Regiment, Ḥillah, 1959-60; commander 14th Infantry Brigade, 1963-64; director general, Military Engineering Directorate, 1966; military attaché, London, 1967.
Trading lower middle class; tradesman	Independent nationalist	Assistant director general of security July-December 1958; commander, ad-Dorah Sector, February 1963; military attaché, Teheran, 1966; commandant, School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering, 1967.

[a]Movement of Arab Nationalists.

[b]Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī is a nephew of Tāha al-Hāshimī, a chief of staff under the monarchy.

[c]Claimants of descent from the Prophet Muḥammad.

[d]This officer attended only the Military Academy; all the others attended both the Academy and the Staff College.

The party had, of course, its own military organization. From early 1955 it functioned under the title of "The Union of Soldiers and Officers." This, by the way, set it off at once from the Free Officers' movement which

accepted only officers in its ranks. Tied in its formal program to purely national aims–the combating of the Baghdād Pact, the expulsion of foreign military experts and foreign military missions, the raising of the living standards of the soldiers, and the transformation of the army from a tool of the imperialists into an instrument of patriotic policy–"The Union of Soldiers and Officers" attracted also non-Communists. But it remained firmly in the hands of the party, and came directly under Aṭshān Ḍayyūl al-Azairjāwī, a 34-year-old Arab Shī'ī ex-army lieutenant of peasant origin and from the town of Nāṣiriyyah, and a member of the Central Committee since 1949. Its foremost figures in the army were Colonel Ibrahīm Ḥusain, a battalion commander, and Staff Brigadier Ismā'īl 'Alī, commander of the artillery of the First Division. Both were in their forties, and Sunnī Arabs from the tribe of aj-Jubūir. Ḥusain, however, hailed from Baghdād and 'Alī from Mosul. Ḥusain was a card-carrying member of the party, whereas 'Alī appears to have been a mere traveling companion.[47]

The sponsoring of "The Union of Soldiers and Officers" by the party could be said to mark something of a shift in its outlook. As late as 1954, the party, mindful of the interference of the troops against the uprising of November, reckoned on the possibility of a head-on conflict with the military forces of the state. "We will not at all be surprised," the party affirmed at the time,

> if circumstances will compel us in the future to collide with this army. . . . It is incumbent upon us, therefore, to take advantage of the existing conditions of "peace" to build wide support in the thick of the soldiers, forge cordial bonds with them and prepare them for the decisive days. The greatest gift that we can offer to the revolutionary workers and peasants is to win over to their side a part of the armed forces of the enemy.[48]

The first appeal by "The Union of Soldiers and Officers" rested on a somewhat more optimistic view of the army, and was couched more in national than class terms. Issued on 30 January 1955, when the party was battling to ward off the Baghdād Pact, the appeal urged "the men of lofty courage . . . the zealous conscripts and volunteers in all the detachments of the army . . . and the noble-minded officers, who love their country" to

come out into the streets in their uniforms–no mention was made of their arms–and stand shoulder to shoulder with the people against "the imperialists and traitors."[49]

Later, the party became more distinctly hopeful in its conception of the army. In the party's appraisals increasing emphasis was placed on "the importance of the role of the national military forces in the national revolution." The Second Party Conference, held in September 1956, put the seal on this trend. By that time Staff Brigadier Ismā'īl 'Alī of "The Union of Soldiers and Officers" had established contact with Qāsim. Subsequently, Qāsim entered into relations, on an informal and irregular basis, with the Communist party proper, and maintained these relations after he rose to the chairmanship of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers, using as intermediaries Rashīd Muṭlak, an old personal friend, and Lieutenant Colonel Waṣfī Ṭāher,[50] a cousin of the veteran Communist Zakī Khairī.[51] On occasions in 1958, in the months before the Revolution–and every time after using all the precaution he could–Qāsim met directly with Kamāl 'Umar Naḍhmī, the Communist member of the Supreme National Committee of the Front of National Union. In all this Qāsim acted on his own and without the knowledge of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers.[52]

The Supreme Committee had, on the day it was founded, resolved to forbid all contacts between the Free Officers and civilians of any coloring. But this proved to be impracticable. For one thing, the agitation of the Communists affected to some extent the work of the committee. For another, the Ba'th had for some time begun to build cells of its own in the Military Academy and Aviation School. Some of the leaders of the Independence party, notably Fā'iq as-Sāmarrā'ī, had also personal connections with individual officers. Moreover, with the alliance of the parties in the Front of National Union in 1957, their efforts in the army increased and took on, to a degree, a coordinated form. This could not leave the Supreme Committee unconcerned, the more so as it felt that the front was too amateurish and did not distinguish "patriotic" from "corrupt" officers. The Directorate of Security and the Military Intelligence were more watchful than might be suspected. There were also undercover men working for a number of foreign embassies and for "international Zionism." The front thus little appreciated the perils that missteps could bring upon

the Free Officers. Under the circumstances, the necessity for it to desist from any further contact with the members of the army was, from the point of view of the Supreme Committee, undeniable. The committee accordingly deputed Colonel Rajab ʻAbd-ul-Majīd, its secretary, to find means to convey to the front a warning in this sense. He approached for the purpose ʻAbd-as-Sattār ʻAlī al-Ḥusain, a lawyer and a member of the Independence party, who passed on the warning to Ṣiddīq Shanshal, a leader of this party and one of its representatives in the front. The warning was not without its effect. The Baʻth ordered its military supporters to affiliate themselves to the Free Officers. The Communists made sure that their "Union of Soldiers and Officers" would not be in the way: on the request of the Supreme Committee, this organization put an end to its printed propaganda. The front as a whole effected the needed adjustment in its line of policy. At the same time, it expressed the desire to have one of its members sit on the meetings of the Supreme Committee. While the desire was not granted, it was agreed early in 1958 that contacts should take place, whenever necessary, between Colonel Rajab ʻAbd-ul-Majīd on behalf of the committee and Ṣiddīq Shanshal on behalf of the front. But, as already indicated, Qāsim himself did not abide by this arrangement and kept up independent connections, not only with the Communists but also with the National Democrats.[53]

During the first half of 1958 the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers met frequently to consider the varying problems that the envisaged coup entailed. It had not only to draw out an appropriate plan of action or agree on the main features of the future regime, but also to weigh and provide for every likely counter-move that it could discern. In taking up these problems, or one or the other of the aspects or elements natural to them, the committee did not always proceed with method or in a strictly logical order, but according to its own light and as circumstances dictated.

One problem that pressed itself insistently on the attention of the committee early in 1958 was the possible armed interference on the part of some or all of the other powers of the Baghdād Pact. The committee came to look upon this contingency as the most serious obstacle to staging the coup, and naturally grew anxious to ascertain how far it could, at the critical moment, count upon the friendly help of the United Arab Republic and the Soviet Union. A proposal to send abroad a member of the committee to make the necessary enquiries did not find enough support. Eventually the

decision went in favor of entrusting Ṣiddīq Shanshal of the front of National Union with the mission. In the course of February, Shanshal flew to Egypt, met President Gamāl ʻAbd-un-Nāṣir, and received definite assurances from him that the United Arab Republic would back the revolution without reserve. The Soviet ambassador in Cairo, with whom ʻAbd-un-Nāṣir took up the matter, also affirmed that, in the event of a hostile counter-action, his country would stand by the Iraqis, as it stood by the Egyptians during the tripartite aggression in 1956. It is not certain whether anyone sought clarification as to what the Soviet promise meant in real practical terms. At any rate, the Supreme Committee apparently drew much comfort from the results of Shanshal's mission. It also committed itself unanimously to a proposal by Staff Brigadier Nājī Ṭāleb to proclaim the immediate union of Iraq with the United Arab Republic upon an antagonistic intervention by any of the parties to the Baghdad Pact.

One or two months later, in the spring of that year, the committee addressed itself to the question of the future revolutionary regime. Slowness of decision was not one of its characteristics. Where politicians would have crawled, the committee leapt. In one night sitting it settled upon a republic. In another it determined upon a number of other important steps: to exile King Faiṣal II; to bring to trial without delay Crown Prince ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh and Premier Nūrī as-Saʻīd, and promptly carry out the judgments passed upon them; to try on a charge of "treason and collaboration with the imperialists and Zionists" some of the ex-premiers and other members of the oligarchy; to purge the army and government from "opportunists"; to appoint army officers to the governorships of provinces and directorships of police and internal security; to create a three-man Sovereignty Council to exercise the prerogatives of the republic; to form either a cabinet composed predominantly of army officers and of only three civilians for the posts of ministers of finance, health, and justice, or a mixed cabinet in which the premiership and the posts of ministers of defence and interior would be military preserves; to organize a Revolutionary Council, with powers to be defined after the revolution, from the members of the Supreme Committee and from other Free Officers, and to place directly under it all the armed forces of the state.[54]

To its more immediate task, the preparation of the coup, the committee devoted itself at various points. In measure as it perceived an obstacle, it

grappled with it. Often it could calculate and build only on the basis of expectations or on what was merely probable. This is because in endeavors of this nature, as could well be imagined, plans are easily upset by the play of chance or the intervention of an accident.

Of course, the committee had no difficulty defining the aim to which the coup had to be directed: to occupy simultaneously or in a planned order the key technical institutions and the commanding political summits in the city of Baghdād. The heart of the problem lay in appending to this aim the appropriate series of acts that would lead to it and in giving the result a decisive and overwhelming character.

Concretely speaking, the problem was in effect threefold. Partly, it was one of means. The committee had enough striking units at its disposal, but they were all without ammunition. The entire army was in this condition. The government hoped thereby to shield itself from any blow from that quarter. But the Free Officers got round the difficulty. They did not, as was subsequently rumored, acquire what they needed from Egypt or Syria, but deviously, painstakingly, and over many months appropriated some of the ammunition used in night maneuvers. Moreover, on the day of the coup, the striking units carried off the ammunition stored at the Infantry Training School and at one of the mobile police centers.

Another no less crucial side of the problem related to the necessity of investing the blow with all the advantages of a surprise. For this, secrecy and swiftness did not suffice. It was also absolutely essential that the striking units should move from their camps to Baghdād without arousing the least suspicion, the more so as the government had up its sleeve a contingency plan envisaging the systematic destruction of defiles, bridges, bottlenecks, and so on, to forestall a coup d'état and "freeze" the army in its barracks.[55] This meant, in effect, that the attempt should coincide with a march of troops toward or through Baghdād permitted by the authorities. The troops had also in that circumstance to be sufficiently infiltrated by Free Officers. Two ways were thus open to the Supreme Committee. One was to strike on Army Day–the sixth of January–taking advantage of the habitual commemorative parade. Back in December 1957 the committee had entertained the idea in earnest. The plan was simple: instead of moving to the parade ground at ar-Rashīd camp, the units led by the Free Officers were to take over the capital. At the time, by the way, the committee had not

yet considered the obstacle that the Baghdād Pact could offer, nor attempted to formulate the political principles by which it should steer its course. But it was not for these reasons that the idea was abandoned. Colonel ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān ʻĀref, commander of the Faiṣal Armored Regiment, the chief force in the plan, had simply refused to go along with the committee: he maintained that he did not have enough ammunition for his weapons, could rely on only a few of his subordinate officers, and should expect trouble from his deputy, Colonel Salmān al-Ḥaṣṣān, with whom he was on bad terms. As the committee could not afford to wait till another Army Day, it now pinned its hopes on the contingency of one or the other of the brigades, officered by men loyal to it, passing through Baghdād on duty. This was the alternative way lying before it.

Obviously, the problem of achieving surprise, inextricably bound as it was with the opportune moving of the troops, resolved itself into–became in fact the same as–the problem of the timing of the coup. In this respect, the committee had only to take one other circumstance into account. Since, from the spring of 1958, the overthrow of the monarchy became the first motive of the committee, it followed that if the blow was to go home, it had to be delivered on a day when the foremost representatives of the monarchy, Nūrī as-Saʻīd, Crown Prince ʻAbd-ul-Ilāh, and the king, would be in Iraq. Only the capture of all three of them could make the success of the coup complete.

In the latter part of June information reached the Supreme Committee that the Twentieth Infantry Brigade had received orders to move on 3 July–the move was later put off to the seventh and then to the night of 13-14 July–toward Jordan from its camp at Jalawlā'. Two of the three battalions of the brigade was led by Free Officers, and the brigade had to pass through Baghdād over the Khirr bridge, which lies close to the royal palace. The committee at once realized that zero day was at hand. But as it now stood on the threshold of the revolution, it split apart.

Tension had been building up in the committee for some time. It derived to no little extent from the impatience of the younger strata of the Free Officers. Craving for action and wearied with cautious counsels, many of them had, only three or four weeks before, threatened to break away and go forward on their own. In the committee itself, this spirit found its best

representative in Staff Colonel ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref. A man of undoubted courage but hasty judgment, he inclined to urge hazardous undertakings, but could not carry his colleagues with him. He did not relent, however. One day, a Thursday–in all probability the twelfth of June–at a meeting of the committee he announced on a sudden that he and Staff Brigadier ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, who was not present, had decided to pull the coup on the following Saturday. This came as a bolt out of the blue. Some of the members of the committee were clearly offended. They protested, not without heat, that decisions could not be made in this fashion, that the day chosen was inopportune as the crown prince was out of the country, that to proceed with so rash an enterprise would be to court bitter failure. But ‘Āref did not budge. It would be Saturday or never, he retorted. It was, incidentally, at this same meeting that without preliminaries and for no apparent reason ‘Āref exclaimed: “I tell you, brothers, *mākū za‘īm iliā Karīm*–there is no leader other than Karīm,” that is, other than Qāsim. In not many months the Communists would pick up the rhyme phrase and turn it against ‘Āref himself.

‘Āref’s oddities caused Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, the first deputy chairman, Staff Brigadier Nājī Ṭāleb, the second deputy chairman, and Staff Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, another senior member, to offer their resignation, but at the next meeting they were prevailed upon to withdraw it. Undaunted, ‘Āref pressed again for early action. Staff Colonel Muḥsin Ḥusain al-Ḥabīb tried to put a curb upon his impatience, and in the process apparently said some hard things to him. Feeling himself affronted, ‘Āref boycotted the committee from this day onward. This happened a fortnight or so before word came that the move to Jordan of the Twentieth Infantry Brigade had been decided upon.

Strange things began now to take place. A meeting of the committee, convoked toward the end of June in order to set the day of the coup and make the necessary final preparations, scarcely got under way when it ran into trouble. The underlying cause is not entirely clear, but there is little doubt as to the precise circumstances. At the opening of the meeting, someone proposed–and the proposal was quickly carried–that a branch committee be created and given the task of making recommendations for filling the high administrative posts in the future revolutionary regime. The name of Retired Colonel Ṭāher Yaḥya and then that of Retired Major

Muḥammad Sab’ were put up as candidates for election to this committee. After that, Qāsim himself entered the name of ‘Āref. To this last candidature Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd immediately objected, and was about to state his grounds–‘Āref’s boycott of the Supreme Committee and his remoteness from Baghdād–when Qāsim cut him short and in bitter and unsparing terms accused him of being the cause of ‘Āref’s estrangement and of intriguing for the exclusion of certain members from the Supreme Committee. He also laid to him the widening breach in the ranks of the Free Officers. No one had expected this outburst, and least of all ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, who apparently had little to do with the ‘Āref affair, but may not have been entirely innocent of factious activity–though on this evidence fails us. ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, from whose memoirs these particulars are drawn, affirms that at this point he felt that the attack upon him had been prepared in advance, and that it aimed at “certain results” which could be turned to account in the future, and would be used to justify the treatment actually meted out to some of the members of the Supreme Committee after the triumph of the revolution. Anyhow, at the time ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, intensely resentful, requested an immediate investigation to establish the truth of the facts, and resolutely added that he was not prepared to cooperate with a man who could level against him such serious and completely groundless accusations. The atmosphere grew so tense that the meeting had to be adjourned.

The committee next assembled on the third or fourth of July at Qāsim’s house in ‘Alwiyyah without ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, who refused to attend. It looked into the question of the precise timing of the coup and was, among other things, to choose the members of the revolutionary cabinet, the Revolutionary Council, and the Sovereignty Council but it never did so. A knock came at the door of the house. An unknown person entered, closeted himself briefly with Qāsim, and left. Qāsim then announced that the Military Intelligence had gotten knowledge of the gathering and would effect arrests at any moment. His consociates hurriedly dispersed. It was only after the revolution that they realized that he had played a game with them.

The committee never came together again. Its members waited in the next days in vain for a sign from Qāsim. He treated them as if they did not exist. He even tried through Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Laṭīf ad-Darrājī, whom Staff

Colonel Muḥsin Ḥusain al-Ḥabīb and Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd met by accident at the Officers’ Club on Friday evening the eleventh of July, to convey the impression that the date of the coup had been put off and that the Twentieth Infantry Brigade would not strike on its approach from Jalawlā’ but would first pass through Baghdād and move to al-Fallūjah and then, on a day to be subsequently fixed, wheel back and carry out the coup. The members of the committee were not so easily taken in this time. They now moved, however, in painful uncertainty, and on the night of 13-14 July remained without sleep, inwardly in turmoil, and sick with impatience for daybreak.

Later, it came to be believed that Qāsim and ‘Āref had laid their heads together a fortnight in advance of the coup and schemed to exclude their colleagues from any leading role in the revolution or in the regime to which it gave rise. This belief finds some support in the statement made by ‘Āref before the Special Supreme Military Tribunal on 31 December 1958. “The leader said to me,” he affirmed, “let us be courteous to them as brothers . . . but the decisive action is between me and you.”[56]

At 2100 hours on the night of 13-14 July, the Twentieth Infantry Brigade, led by Staff Brigadier Aḥmad Ḥaqqī and consisting of three battalions of about a thousand men each, broke camp at Jalawlā’ and, with Jordan as its ultimate destination, moved toward Baghdād, 140 kilometers to the southwest. At about 2:30 in the morning it came to a halt at Banī Sa‘d, within 10 kilometers of the capital. As preconcerted, Staff Colonel ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref, commander of the Third Battalion, went at this point into action. By some little stratagem, he beguiled Brigadier Ḥaqqī into preceding the unit to al-Fallūjah. He then tried to persuade Staff Colonel Yāsīn Muḥammad Ra’ūf, commander of the Second Battalion, to join in the coup, and wasted precious time in the process but, failing, arrested him with the help of Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Laṭīf Jāsim ad-Darrājī, commander of the First Battalion, who was in on the thing from the start. Taking full command, he assembled all the officers in the brigade and, in brief and spirited terms, disclosed to them the aim of the movement and the plan designed to attain it. What he said may have leapt with their own instincts, or some of them, at least, may have been too timid or too passive to offer any obstacle. And then not a few were Free Officers, and must have

prepared the ground psychologically for the approval which all now voiced. His mind delivered of any apprehensions on this score, ‘Āref gave word for the advance to be resumed.

At 4:30 A.M., or thereabouts, the brigade entered Baghdād. Colonel ad-Darrājī’s First Battalion rolled at once into ar-Raṣāfah on the east bank, and had to take possession of the administrative high points, including the Ministry of Defence. The Second Battalion, now under Lt. Col. Fāḍil Muḥammad ‘Alī, pushed forward to al-Karkh on the west bank, and had to neutralize the mobile police center at aṣ-Ṣālḥiyyah and wrest its munitions depot. ‘Āref’s own battalion also crossed to al-Karkh and had to seize the radio station, Nūrī’s house, and the royal palace. Simultaneously, several officers’ groups, guided directly by the Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers–which, it will be recalled, had been in connection with ‘Āref since May–moved, as agreed upon beforehand, to occupy ar-Rashīd camp and round up the chief of staff and other brass-hats.

Everything fell out as planned except for the escape of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd. It would also appear that the shooting down of the royal family in the palace grounds was not premeditated. According to Lieutenant Fāleḥ Ḥanḍhal of the Palace Guard, who did not identify himself with the Revolution and now lives in Abū Ḍhabī, the Guard did not retaliate to the small-arms firing which began at around 6:15 A.M. or to the shelling half an hour later from an antitank gun that belonged to Colonel ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref’s Faiṣal Armored Regiment, and that had been brought up from al-Washshāsh camp to support the original attacking party of about forty men. From the outset, Prince ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh seemed to lack the will for resistance. Possibly he feared that all or some of the two thousand royal guardsmen would go over to the insurrection if ordered out of their barracks. Probably he realized that the game was up, and that he was face-to-face with an irreversible march of events. Meanwhile, the shelling had set off a fire. From the burning upper hall of the palace, columns of thick smoke were rising to the sky. On the outside the movement was growing. More and more soldiers were coming into action. From the various city districts crowds of people were streaming toward the scene, and soon united with the troops. At about 7:45 A.M., after a brief parley of its commander with emissaries of the besiegers, the Royal Guard surrendered. A little before 8:00, the king, the prince, and other members of the royal household stumbled out the back entrance of the

palace into the courtyard to face half a circle of officers. Moments later, from the front entrance emerged at a run, a submachine gun in his hand, Captain ʻAbd-us-Sattār Sab' al-ʻAbūsī, one of the emissaries, who, instantly and from behind, fired into the royal family. His action touched off a burst of bullets from every direction and from everyone bearing arms. Not only did the king and his party fall to the ground, but also three of the officers that had stood in the semicircle. Captain al-ʻAbūsī, who was not privy to the insurrection and had joined in on hearing ʻĀref's appeal over the radio, subsequently admitted to Lieutenant Ḥanḍhal that at the time he was "in a state of frenzy and felt as if a black cloud had covered his vision and that he pressed on the trigger of his submachine gun unconsciously and without realizing what went on around him."[57]

As for Nūrī as-Saʻīd, he was, as is known, caught the next day disguised as a woman, and was at once done to death by an air force sergeant. His body was, after burial, disinterred by an angry crowd and, like that of the intensely hated crown prince, dragged through the streets, strung up, torn to pieces, and finally burnt. Inhumaneness? It is perhaps not appropriate to pass judgment, but it must be added, not to justify but to explain, that Nūrī and the prince were never tender with the lives of their people. And then is it very strange that inhumaneness should issue from the dehumanizing conditions in which the *shargāwiyyas*–the mud-hutters–of Baghdād subsisted?

Ninety minutes or so before the destruction of the royal family, at about 6:30 A.M., ʻĀref in person had begun to read over the radio "Proclamation No. 1," thus giving the public the first word of the coup. The proclamation, to which was prefixed the auspicious Qur'ānic form, "In the name of the all-merciful God," ran as follows:

Noble People of Iraq,

Trusting in God and with the aid of the loyal sons of the people and the national armed forces, we have undertaken to liberate the beloved homeland from the corrupt crew that imperialism installed. . . . Brethren,

The army is of you and for you and has carried out what you desired. . . . Your duty is to support it . . . (in the wrath that it is pouring on the Riḥāb Palace and the house of Nūrī as-Saʻīd).[58] Only by preserving it from the plots of imperialism and its stooges can victory be brought to completion.

We appeal to you, therefore to report to the authorities all offenders, traitors, and corrupt people so that they could be uprooted. . . . Citizens,

(While admiring your fervent patriotic spirit . . . , we call upon you to remain calm and maintain order and unity . . . in the interest of the homeland.)[59]

O People,

We have taken oath to sacrifice our blood and everything we hold dear for your sake. Rest assured that we will continue to work on your behalf. Power shall be entrusted to a government emanating from you and inspired by you. This can only be realized by the creation of a people's republic, which will uphold complete Iraqi unity, tie itself in bonds of fraternity with the Arab and Moslem states, act in keeping with the principles of the United Nations and the resolutions of the Bandung Conference, and honor all pledges and treaties in conformity with the interests of the homeland. Accordingly, the (new) national government shall henceforth be called the Republic of Iraq. . . .

The Commander-in-Chief of the National Armed Forces

Within hours of this announcement, the will of the revolution prevailed everywhere. One unit of the army after another had rallied to its support or had been seized by Free Officers. At noon Qāsim, who had been waiting for the results at al-Manṣūr camp, 95 kilometers away, entered Baghdād at the head of his Nineteenth Infantry Brigade and installed himself at the Defence Ministry. The monarchy had come to an end. A few rounds of shelling had sufficed to shake it down. Except for the feeble resistance of the guard at Nūrī's house, not a hand had been lifted in its defense.[60]

Did the Communists and their partners in the Front of National Union contribute in any way to the ease with which the monarchy crumbled? It is now certain that the Communists knew beforehand of the intentions of Qāsim. Officers close to him kept the party command fairly well posted on what was going on. Moreover, on Friday July 11, Qāsim himself informed Kamāl 'Umar Naḍhmī, the Communist member of the Supreme Committee of the Front of National Union, of the precise day of the coup. Word in the same sense reached also Kāmil ach-Chādīrchī, the president of the National Democrats; Ṣiddīq Shanshal, the secretary of the Independence party; and Fū'ād ar-Rikābī, the leader of the Ba'thists. Appropriate measures for the support of the initiative of the Free Officers were promptly taken.[61] The Communist party center, for its part, placed all the party organizations on the alert on the night of July 13-14, alluding only in the vaguest manner to the reasons for this step. Simultaneously, it issued a "general directive" to the *mas'ūls* of the principal party committees. The directive, which was unsigned and bore the date of July 12, is well worth citing, not only because it nailed down the basic positions of the party on the eve of the coup, but also because it already looked beyond July 14 and foreshadowed the tragic nationalist-Communist conflict that was to come:

> In view of the critical posture of affairs, internally and on the Arab front, and the possibilities of its evolution from one moment to another, and in order to assure the unity of the political acts of our party organizations in a sudden emergency or in complicated circumstances, we deem it necessary at present to emphasize that our fundamental slogans are as follows:

1. Withdrawal from the Baghdād Pact, abolition of the bilateral agreement with Britain, and resistance to the Eisenhower doctrine.

2. The unleashing of democratic freedoms for the masses of the people . . . and the release of political prisoners. . . .

3. The adoption of effective measures to protect our national wealth and our national economy . . . and solve the problems relating to the livelihood of the masses.

4. The coming into being of a government that will pursue an independent Arab national policy . . . serve the peace . . . convert the "Arab Union" into an authentic union between Iraq and Jordan . . . and unite on a federal basis with the U.A.R. [This position was in line with that adopted by the Front of National Union back in April 1958.][62]

We further deem it opportune to lay stress on:

1. the necessity of avoiding ambiguous or extremist slogans or slogans glorifying this or that leader of the national or Arab movement and thereby throwing our essential watchwords into the shade and belittling the struggle of the masses and the national front [this is a clear thrust in the direction of Nāṣirite hero-worshipers]; and

2. the necessity of showing great vigilance toward various kinds of intrigues and conspiracies [this is a *mise en garde* against the Ba'th and others, induced by the experience of the Communists in Syria[63]] and toward the activities of the agents of imperialism. . . .

Finally, it is indispensable to look upon the mobilization of the widest popular masses in support of the correct slogans at any given moment and around the paramount watchwords of our national democratic movement as our fundamental task under all conditions.[64]

The directive had not been many hours in the hands of basic party organizers when the first shots fired by 'Āref's soldiers at the royal palace rang out. Members of the party began issuing from their homes or underground hideaways. The movement increased from minute to minute until, about 8:00 A.M., the whole active following of the party was on the streets. Nationalists of all hues had also come out. Before very long the capital overflowed with people–*shargāwiyyas* and others–many of them in a fighting mood and united by a single passion: "Death to the traitors and agents of imperialism!" It was like a tide coming in, and at first engulfed

and with a vengeance Nūrī's house and the royal palace, but soon extended to the British consulate and embassy and other places, and became so terrible and overwhelming in its sweep that the military revolutionaries, ill at ease, declared a curfew and later, in the afternoon, martial law. When in the end, after nightfall, the crowds ebbed back, the statue of Faiṣal, the symbol of the monarchy, lay shattered, and the figure of General Maude, the conqueror of Baghdād, rested in the dust outside the burning old British Chancellery.

Did this mass movement, in which on a conservative estimate at least one hundred thousand people in Baghdād alone took part, and which in the succeeding days grew in scale and intensity, have any historical significance? The amazing thing about the act of governmental overturn proper is that the troops that achieved it numbered no more than three thousand, and that two-thirds of them carried no ammunition at all; and the remainder–'Āref's own battalion–only a few rounds per man. In the light of this fact, the coming out of a hundred thousand people into the streets and the ruthlessness with which at least some of them proceeded to give vent to their feelings must have had a greater weight in determining the historical outcome of that fateful day than one might at first glance be disposed to admit. We are not forgetting, of course, that 'Āref counted on eventual support from other units under the command of Free Officers. This, however, does not detract from the part that the movement of the populace played. For one thing, by clogging streets and bridges not only in Baghdād but in many other towns, it hindered possible hostile counteractions. More than that, by virtue of its vehemence, it had a tremendous psychological effect. It planted fear in the heart of the supporters of the monarchy, and helped to paralyze their will and give the coup the irresistible character that was its surest bulwark.

But this is, no doubt, only part of the explanation for the ease with which the monarchy went to pieces. Quite aside from the suddenness and efficiency of the military coup itself, there is also the very important fact that on July 14 the royalists possessed at bottom little more than the appearance of power, and had for some time lost its authentic premises–the confidence and loyalty of the widest sections of the politically conscious elements in the army and among the people at large. In other words, the

coup succeeded so swiftly and so conclusively because it expressed a basic bent in the society, if only in a negative sense.

Do the events of July 14 amount to a revolution, or do they merely constitute a coup d'état? Waldemar J. Gallman, ex-United States ambassador to Iraq, takes the view that what happened on that day can in no way be called a revolution. "It was simply a seizure of power by a small, determined group." He admits that there were demonstrations but these, he adds, were devoid of any "spontaneous" character and the "hordes of unruly jubilant people" who took part in them were, he insists, "not representative Iraqis but hoodlums recruited by agitators."[65] Gallman lays on the color a bit too thickly. Surely the participation of about one hundred thousand people in the demonstrations constituted something more than what he represents. This is not to deny that there were "hoodlums" among the crowds, but "hoodlums" make their appearance in almost every revolution, and revolution, after all, is an indelicate, rough, and violent affair, at least in part. Moreover, the elements of agitation and conscious organization are not inherently alien to the notion of revolution, as Gallman appears to suppose. But quite apart from the question of the participation of the populace, it must be admitted at once that if one were to confine one's vision to the initiatory role of the Twentieth Brigade under ʿĀref, or even to the long preparatory work of the Free Officers, one would have to agree that what occurred on July 14 was an enterprise planned by a small group in secrecy from the people. And it was, of course, partly so. But again one must take a wider view of things. One must, at least, place the events of July 14 in their natural historic context. From this perspective, they appear as the climax of the struggle of a whole generation of the middle, lower-middle, and working classes, the culmination of an underlying, deeply embedded insurrectionary tendency of which the coup of 1936, the military movement of 1941, the *Wathbah* of 1948, the *Intifāḍah* of 1952, and the risings of 1956 were other manifestations. The Free Officers were, by visible and invisible threads and in a very profound manner, caught up in this tendency, and it was in part their realization–as clearly comes out in their talk–that action on the popular level alone could not bring down the old regime, that drove them to seize the initiative.[66] But it is not enough to look backwards. We have to include in our field of vision not only what preceded, but also what followed the events of July 14. Indeed, a glance at the consequences is

enough to make us realize that we are in the presence of a genuine revolution. A superficial political phenomenon could not have released passions so vehement or aroused fears or hopes so serious as came to pervade the years 1958-1959. July 14 really brought more than a mere change of government. Not only was the monarchy demolished or the whole Western position in the Arab East weakened in a radical manner, but the fortunes of whole classes were also deeply affected. The social power of the greater landed shaikhs and the big town *mallāks* was to a considerable extent destroyed, and the position of the urban workers and the middle and lower-middle strata of society qualitatively enhanced. The pattern of life of the peasants was also altered, partly by the transfer of property, and partly by the abolition of the Tribal Disputes Regulations and the bringing of the countryside within the purview of the national law. It is true that the revolution did not go deep enough, but this tends to be the characteristic of all revolutions in which middle-class elements play the guiding role. It is also true that the revolution has been erratic in its course and has had its ups and downs. This is partly due to the heterogeneity of the middle class, and the splits within its ranks and within the ranks of the officer corps, which is its armed segment and leading layer. Another causative factor has been the pressure from the classes below, that is, from the Communist-led classes that work with their hands. There is also the very crucial fact that in upsetting the old power structure and the old class configuration, the revolution has disturbed the delicate balance between the various ethnic and sectarian communities of Iraq, and basically between the Arabs and Kurds and the Shī‘īs and Sunnīs, mainly owing to the unevenness in the social development of these communities. One particularly unhappy consequence has been the revolt of the Kurds, which added in an especially acute way to the vicissitudes of the revolution. For these reasons, and because of recurrent coups d’état, the revolution is still in a state of fluidity, and it is doubtful whether it will in the foreseeable future attain a tolerably durable social equilibrium. But this is to generalize and anticipate.

42

“SOLE LEADER,” DUAL POWER

The phrase “Sole Leader” possibly originated with a worthless flatterer, but could well have been a carefully prepared political formula. The words were, it is almost certain, first used in October 1958, by a junior officer in Qāsim’s entourage. As, however, no one seems to be able to identify this man, there is no way of determining whether he was or was not connected with the Communists–who, anyhow, at once adopted the slogan and gave it the widest possible circulation. Indeed it became, in a period when serious danger hovered over them, the principal note in their public appeals, enabling them to give a clear focus to very vague currents traversing broad masses of very different Iraqis and, by pulling these masses behind them, to emerge in strength from the shadows into the open stage and turn, for a time, the course of the revolution in their favor. No other cry could have served their purposes better: it not only ingratiated them with Qāsim, but hit at all their immediate rivals simultaneously–at ʻĀref, ʻAbd-un-Nāṣir, the Baʻth, and all other pan-Arab nationalists. Armed with it, they proceeded to build organs of power at the popular level, even as the cry began taking flesh and state authority at the top narrowed and became simpler and increasingly isolated, and thus perilously vulnerable. In brief, the cry appears much like the natural answer to the dramatic situation that they faced after July 14. But it is necessary to elaborate.

The regime that emerged from the Revolution of July bore, at least in its first months, the imprint of ambiguousness. There was, to begin with, no indubitable focus of political authority. No one person, force, or institution, in other words, dominated the scene. On paper, as of July 27, 1958–that is, with the enactment of the provisional constitution–the legislative and executive powers were vested in the Council of Ministers.[1] But Colonel

‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref, who, as direct commander of the military unit that pulled the coup, enjoyed great prestige, said and did things without reference to that body and, with new levers in his hands–the posts of deputy commander-in-chief of the armed forces, deputy premier, and minister of interior–seemed to be reaching for the heights. Brigadier ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, the commander-in-chief, premier, minister of defence, and official leader of the Free Officers, was also in his own right a center of independent influence, pulling more often than not in a direction different than that of ‘Āref. But neither he nor ‘Āref felt strong enough to ignore completely the Commanders’ Council, which came into being immediately after the Revolution, comprised some of the more prominent of the Free Officers (see Table 42-1), and now shared, on a somewhat irregular basis, in the determination of policy and the distribution of military offices. The three-man Sovereignty Council, which was meant to exercise the functions of the presidency of the Republic, and especially its chairman, Staff Major General Najīb ar-Rubai’ī, a widely respected officer, were also at the time more than a decoration. Moreover, now as later, in view of the inexperience of the army officers and their low political level, some civilians in the cabinet and, in particular, those with expert knowledge and the right kind of abilities–the very few men like Muḥammad Ḥadīd, the minister of finance, to be specific–carried much weight in actual government, and in their patient and indirect manner gave the lead in many things, even if they often ceded to the caprice of the officers, and though the latter might have imagined that they were pursuing their own devices.

To the uncertainty, induced by the absence of a central point of power, added not only the growing rivalry between Qāsim and ‘Āref, but also the discord that had set in among the Free Officers shortly before the Revolution,[2] and which now seethed and festered below an extremely slender outward harmony. Many of the Free Officers could not readily forgive their exclusion at the last moment by Qāsim and ‘Āref from any important part in the coup for which they had long worked,[3] and strongly resented that, when all made sacrifices, Qāsim and ‘Āref should alone enjoy the glory. Their bitterness was the greater because of the cavalier manner in which the latter ignored the agreement to create a Revolutionary Council,[4] and packed the Council of Commanders with brigadiers and colonels from their own faction. Not a few of the members of the Supreme Committee of

the Free Officers had also individual reasons to be aggrieved. Colonel Rif‘at al-Ḥājj Sirrī, the director of military intelligence, smarted from a sense of inadequate appreciation: his role as the founder of the movement was only long afterwards publicly recognized. Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb ash-Shawwāf viewed his ordering to the command of the garrison at Mosul as a sort of unmerited exile. The appointment of Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, the secretary of the committee, to the minor post of secretary of the Development Board scarcely flattered his self-esteem. All these things were bound at length to end in serious trouble.

TABLE 42-1

The Commanders’ Council in 1958

Name	*Rank and post*	*Status or role in free officers' movement prior to revolution*	*Date and place of birth*
'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim	Staff brigadier; commander-in-chief of armed forces; prime minister; and minister of defence	Chairman, Supreme Committee of Free Officers	1914, Baghdād; originally from Ṣuwairah
'Abd-us-Salām 'Āref	Staff colonel; deputy commander-in-chief of armed forces; deputy prime minister; and minister of interior	Member, Supreme Committee of Free Officers	1921, Baghdād, originally from the neighborhood of Sumaichah, Ramādī province.
Najīb ar-Rubai'ī	Staff major general; president of Sovereignty Council	Sympathizer of movement and widely respected by its members	1904, Baghdād
Aḥmad Ṣāliḥ al-Abdī	Staff brigadier; chief of staff and military governor general	Member of Qāsim-'Āref group within Free Officers' movement	1912, Baghdād
Muḥyī-d-Dīn 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd	Staff brigadier; commander of Fourth Armored Division	First deputy chairman, Supreme Committee of Free Officers	1914, Baghdād
'Azīz al-Uqailī	Staff brigadier; commander of First Division	Member of Qāsim-'Āref group within Free Officers' movement	1920, Mosul
Nāḍhim aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī	Staff brigadier; commander of Second Division	Member of Qāsim-'Āref group within Free Officers' movement	1913, Baghdād; originally from Ḥama, Syria.
Khalīl Sa'īd 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān	Staff colonel; commander of Third Division	Member of Qāsim-'Āref group within Free Officers' movement	1918, Baghdād
Jalāl al-Awqatī[c]	Staff air colonel; commander of the air force	Supporter of Iraqi Communist party; on good terms with Qāsim	1914, Baghdād; originally from 'Ānah.

Nation and sect	*Class origin and father's occupation*	*Political inclinations*	*Subsequent history*
Arab (mother: Failiyyah Kurd), Sunnī (Shī'ī mother)	Working class; son of a carpenter-worker	Iraqist with an active sympathy for the poor	Killed 9 February 1963.
Arab, Sunnī	Commercial petty bourgeoisie; son of a draper	Pan-Arab with a strong attachment to Islamic values	Relieved of post of deputy commander-in-chief on 12 September 1958 and of other posts 30 September 1958. For other details see Table 41-2.
Arab, Sunnī	Middling landowning shaikhly class; grandson of a shaikh of Rabī'ah tribe; son of a high government official	More of an academic than a political soldier	President, Sovereignty Council till 8 February 1963; died 1964.
Arab, Sunnī	Petty landowning class; son of a small landowning *sirkāl*[a]	Apolitical; socially a conservative; an old personal friend of Qāsim	Retained same posts till 8 February 1963, when he was retired.
Arab, Sunnī	Military middle class; son of an army brigadier	Influenced by the ideas of *Al-Ahālī* group and of the National Democratic party	Appointed as minister of education on 9 February 1959 and in 1960 as minister of industries, a post which he retained till 8 February 1963, when he was imprisoned and then retired.
Arab, Sunnī	Working class; son of a camel driver	Pan-Arab of conservative leanings	Removed from his command on 18 February 1959; tried in September 1959 on a charge of complicity in Mosul revolt, but acquitted because of insufficient evidence; leader of an army faction 1963-1967; retired.
Arab, Sunnī	Religious middling proprietary class; son of a propertied owner of *Bayn an-Nahrayn* newspaper, which appeared in Turkish period.	Pan-Arab with a strong attachment to Islamic values	Removed from his command on 14 March, 1959; executed on 20 September 1959 for complicity in Mosul revolt.
Arab, Sunnī	Religious petty proprietary class; son of a propertied *imām*[b] of a mosque	Apolitical and religious-minded	Retained post till 8 February 1963, when he was retired.
Arab (mother: Turkoman), Sunnī	Commercial middle bourgeoisie; son of a middling merchant	Communist	Retained post till 8 February 1963, when he was killed.

[a]Agent of a big landowner in direct charge of cultivation.

[b]Leader of prayer.

[c]Jalāl al-Awqātī is a cousin of Hāshim Jawād al-Awqātī, minister of foreign affairs in 1959-1963.

TABLE 42-2

Members of Sovereignty Council and of Qāsim's First Cabinet

Name	*Post and political affiliation*	*Date and place of birth*	*Nation and sect*
Staff Major General Najīb ar-Rubai'ī	President, Sovereignty Council	1904, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah	Member, Sovereignty Council; president, Independence party	1900, Baghdād	Arab, Shī'ī
Khālid an-Naqshbandī	Member, Sovereignty Council	1916, Bāmirnī village, Mosul prov.	Kurd, Sunni
Staff Brigadier 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim	Prime minister and minister of defence	1914, Baghdād	Arab father, Failī Kurdish mother, Sunnī (mother: Shī'ī)
Staff Colonel 'Abd-us-Salām 'Āref	Deputy prime minister and minister of interior	1921, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
Muḥammad Ḥadīd	Minister of finance; vice-president, National Democratic party	1906, Mosul	Arab, Sunnī
Dr. 'Abd-uj-Jabbār aj-Jomard	Minister of foreign affairs	? , Mosul	Arab, Sunnī
Muṣṭafa 'Alī	Minister of justice	1900, Baghdād	Kurd, Sunnī
Dr. Ibrahīm Kubbah	Minister of economy; Marxist but not tied to Communist party	1919, Baghdād	Arab, Shī'ī
Dr. Jāber 'Umar	Minister of education	? , Rāwah	Arab, Sunnī
Staff Brigadier Nājī Ṭāleb	Minister of social affairs	1917, Nāṣiriyyah	Arab, Shī'ī
Bāba 'Alī	Minister of communications and works	? , Sulaimāniyyah	Kurd, Sunnī
Fū'ād ar-Rikābī	Minister of development; secretary, Ba'th party	1931, Nāṣiriyyah	Arab, Shī'ī
Dr. Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ Maḥmūd	Minister of health	? , Kirkūk	Kurd, Sunnī
Hdaib al-Ḥājj Ḥmūd	Minister of agriculture; member, National Democratic party	1918, Dīwāniyyah	Arab, Shī'ī
Ṣiddīq Shanshal	Minister of guidance; secretary, Independence party	1910, Mosul	Arab, Sunnī

Occupation before revolution	*Class origin and father's occupation*	*Subsequent history*
Ex-commander, 3rd Division; ambassador to Saudi Arabia from 1957	Middling landed shaikhly class; grandson of a shaikh of Rabī'ah tribe; son of an enlightened high government official	President, Sovereignty Council, till 8 February 1963; died 1964.
Proprietor; ex-deputy; ex-minister of supply	Landed *chalabī*[a] class of upper middle income, trading in local products; son of a man of religion	Resigned, 7 February 1959.
Ex-staff lieutenant colonel; retired from army, 1952; governor, Arbīl prov.	Landed *ṣūfī murshid*[b] class of upper middle income and high status; son of a landowner	Member, Sovereignty Council till 8 February 1963.
Commander, 19th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Division	Working class; son of a carpenter-worker	Killed 9 February 1963.
Commander, 3rd Battalion, 20th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Division	Trading lower middle class; son of a draper	Relieved of posts, September 1958. See also Table 55-1 and Table 41-2.
General manager and part owner Vegetable Oil Extraction Co.; ex-deputy; ex-minister of supply	Landed *chalabī*[a] class of high income, trading in local products; son of a merchant	Resigned, 23 April 1960.
Lawyer; ex-deputy	Middling mercantile class; son of a merchant	Resigned, 7 February 1959.
Ex-teacher; lawyer; judge, Court of Appeal, Baṣrah	Working class; son of a carpenter-worker (and of a personal friend of Qāsim's father)	Resigned, 13 May 1961 for health reasons.
Ex-professor, College of Commerce; employee of a private firm	Landed *chalabī*[a] class of upper middling income, trading in local products; son of a merchant	Appointed minister of agrarian reform, 1959; relieved of post, 16 February 1960.
Ex-dean, Law School; professor Syrian University	Trading lower middle class; son of a draper	Relieved of post, 30 September 1958.
Commander, Baṣrah Garrison	Landed class of high income; son of a landowner, merchant, deputy, and mayor of Naṣiriyyah	Resigned, 7 February 1959. See also Table 41-2.
Ex-minister of economics; landowner	Landed *sayyid*[c] and *ṣūfī murshid*[b] class of high income; son of Shaikh Mahmud, famed Kurdish rebel, landowner, and spiritual leader of Qādiriyyah mystic path in Sulaimāniyyah	Resigned, 7 February 1959.
Engineer; ex-employee of Ministry of Development	Lower middle class; son of a government employee	Appointed minister of state 30 September 1958; resigned 7 February 1959.
Physician		Resigned, 7 February 1959.
Landowner	Landed class of high income; son of a liberal landowner	Resigned, 5 January 1960.
Lawyer	Mercantile class of high income; son of a grain merchant	Resigned, 7 February 1959.

[a]Merchants of high status but not necessarily of high income.

[b]Leaders of religious mystic path.

[c]Claimants of descent from the Prophet Muḥammad.

Another factor making for uncertainty was the hybrid character of the forces supporting the new regime. This had its mirroring in the composition of the cabinet, which embraced men widely different in their origin, temperament, ideas, and interests [see Table 42-2]. Premier Qāsim, an officer of middling income but from a poor working family, was a strangely elusive person, and with as yet no distinguishable political persuasion. His deputy, Colonel ʻĀref, who descended from a petty draper, was very impulsive, very mercurial, and very Moslem–and, to a noticeable degree, susceptible to the most opposite and unintegrated of political views. Muḥammad Ḥadīd, the talented National Democratic minister of finance, the son of an affluent and reputed merchant and a relative by marriage of the Ṣābunjīs, one of the wealthiest families of Mosul, had abstract socialistic sympathies, but concrete connections with the rising industrialist class. As general manager and owner of about 5 percent of the shares of the Vegetable Oil Extraction Company, he had a point of coinciding interest with the big Baghdādi manufacturer, Nūrī Fattāḥ, the vice chairman company and one of its key shareholders and, among other things, the chairman of the Commercial Bank of Iraq, the managing director of the Fattāḥ Pasha Spinning and Weaving Company, and a principal proprietor of the United Cement Co., and the Iraqi Cement Co. By contrast, the minister of economy, Dr. Ibrahīm Kubbah, was a Marxist ex-professor of commerce, and came from a well-known trading family which was most successful in the nineteenth century but had, for one reason or another, become impoverished. The minister of education, Dr. Jāber ʻUmar, a former dean of the Faculty of Law and a participant in the 1941 Rashīd ʻAlī Movement, had, for his part, rubbed shoulders with the Nazis during World War II. The minister of agriculture, Hdaib al-Ḥājj Ḥmūd, an owner of about 10,000 dūnums[5] of rich rice land in the province of Dīwāniyyah, was an admirer of Leo Tolstoy, and already before the Revolution treated his peasants in an exemplary fashion, turning over to them, as reward for their labor, 60 percent of the produce and causing, in consequence, no little tension in local agrarian relationships. The minister of communications and works, Shaikh Bābā ʻAlī, was the cultured son of Shaikh Maḥmūd, a *sayyid*, a spiritual leader of the mystic Qādirī order, a member of the Barzinjas–the most prominent family of Sulaimāniyyah–an owner of 39,874 dūnums of rain-fed land in 1956, the year of his death,[6] and, to boot, the most

renowned of the Kurdish rebels. The suave, mild-mannered minister of guidance, Ṣiddīq Shanshal, a Sorbonne-educated lawyer from a mercantile background and the director of propaganda under Rashīd ‘Alī, was the secretary of the right-wing, pan-Arab Independence party. The youngest of the ministers, Fū’ād ar-Rikābī, an engineer of humble origin and a very energetic man, but really still a neophyte in politics, held the portfolio of Development and was at the same time the secretary of the left-wing, pan-Arab Ba‘th.

A team so ill-assorted and so self-contradictory could scarcely have been expected to work in real harmony or to endure for very long. In fact, the coalition of forces which this team reflected and which had met on the common ground of enmity to the old regime, was now, with the monarchy in ruins, continually on the verge of breaking apart.

What above all hastened to turn the apparent concord into fierce division was the issue of Arab unity. To weld the Arabs into one nation and bring them under one government had been only a year previously a vision of idealists, a vague popular feeling, a weapon in the arsenal of ambitious parties, or the cry of calculating merchants in search of a wider market. In February of 1958, however, the pan-Arab idea achieved, rather abruptly, a partial fulfillment: with but few preliminaries and moved more by sudden impulse than calm reflection, Syria and Egypt merged in the United Arab Republic. If it will be known only much later that the new link was, in its immediate origin, essentially an impromptu answer to the inner feuds that were wasting the Syrian officer corps away and to the fear that the Syrian Ba‘th felt for its interests, and which the rising power of the Communists had inspired, it became, on the other hand, amply clear in the succeeding months that the United Arab Republic rested more on an intangible tie between the person of ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir and the wide mass of his Syrian admirers than on any genuine organic connection between the people of Syria and the people of Egypt. One other characteristic of the new state was from the outset unmistakable: by the very principle of its being, it had an inherent tendency to reach out beyond its frontiers. In fact, it stood little chance of enduring if it did not exceed them. This was apparent even at that time. In view of the preponderance of the Egyptians, at least in a numerical sense, the accession to the U.A.R. of one or more of the neighboring eastern

Arab states was, from the standpoint of the Syrians, a matter of singular urgency, if only because it would have added to their role and given the union a stronger and more authentic pan-Arab character. This seemed in the given circumstances to entail a strengthening of the hand of the inter-Arab-based Ba‘th. This is why, when the Revolution of July 14 had scarcely begun feeling its path, the branch of the Ba‘th in Iraq placed the question of unity with the U.A.R. upon the order of the day.

Michel ‘Aflaq, the party’s secretary general, launched the campaign in person. On 24 July, of a sudden, he arrived in Baghdād and lost little time in making his voice heard. “Iraq,” he told a gathering of his followers, “has always been the standard-bearer of Arab unity.” He also impressed upon them that the “mission” which Arab nationalism had to fulfill “does not cease because Arab nationalism is life itself.”[7]

According to a well-informed Ba‘thi, who prefers to remain unidentified, Fū’ād ar-Rikābī, the party’s secretary in Iraq, was somewhat adverse to forcing the issue, but ‘Aflaq had his way, and acted in the main through Sa‘dūn Ḥammādī, another member of the local command and the editor of the party-lining *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*. At the same time, both ar-Rikābī and Ḥammādī insist that it was not ‘Aflaq but “the masses of the party” that pressed for unity and in a purely “spontaneous” manner. Crowds, ar-Rikābī adds, could be heard over Baghdād Radio on the very first morning of the Revolution chanting: “We are your soldiers, Jamāl ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir.”[8]

The important point is that the Ba‘th was unequal to the battle which it now had to fight. After all, in Iraq it was of relatively recent growth: it dated, it will be remembered, only from 1949. Its local leaders were without name and without experience. ‘Aflaq, a Syrian, was himself unknown to the masses and, to boot, a Christian. As could be expected, its devotees were not considerable. In 1956 they counted scarcely more than three hundred. However, in the months of intensive political life that followed the Revolution, the party may have sharply grown–perhaps to about three hundred “active members,” twelve hundred “organized partisans,” two thousand “organized supporters,”[9] and ten thousand unorganized sympathizers, as Ba‘thists claim.[10] Even then, its force of attraction hardly compared with that of its Communist rivals.

But what the party lacked in strength, it compensated for in vehemence of agitation. It also posed the question of unity in such a manner that Iraqis

with views different than its own stood fair to being suspected in their loyalty to the Arab cause. Furthermore, it did not hesitate to make ample use of Nāṣir's magic name. *Al-Waḥdah Bākir Bākir ma'–il-Asmar 'Abd-in-Nāṣir*–"Unity Tomorrow Tomorrow with the Brown 'Abd-in-Nāṣir"–became the principal rhyme-chant of its followers. And as it had tried in Syria to leap, with minimum effort, to great influence–in 1952 by uniting with Akram Ḥurānī, the popular deputy from Ḥamā, and in 1958 by hitching its star to that of Nāṣir–so now too it made a rush for its goal by climbing on the shoulders of 'Āref and cloaking itself with his prestige. In this, ambition was not the only spur of the Ba'th. It was also impelled by the genuine zeal for the ideal of unity that animated its ranks.

It would perhaps be inaccurate to say that 'Āref allowed himself to be used. He may have perceived in pan-Arabism his opportunity. Pan-Arabism may also have been a true expression of his deepest feelings. At the same time, from every indication, he felt warmly for Nāṣir.

Stirring apparently to his own impulse and without the knowledge of Qāsim or any authorization from the new government, 'Āref had, in fact, brought up the question of unity with the U.A.R. as early as 18 July 1958, when he first met with Nāṣir in Damascus. According to 'Āref's own account, Nāṣir took the position that the Revolution had, before everything else, to consolidate itself.[11] This fits in with the statement that 'Āref made on his return to Baghdād. "The relations between the U.A.R. and Iraq," he declared, "rest on a unity of objective and the unity of the peoples."[12] He said nothing at all about a merger or any other link of a constitutional nature. However, in the ensuing agitated weeks, as he went from town to town inflaming, with his ecstatic vehemence, popular sympathy on behalf of the revolutionary regime, he made a point of mentioning Nāṣir in every speech he delivered, referring to him as "the hero," "the great liberator," "our beloved brother," or "our elder brother-in-the-struggle."[13] Simultaneously, he drew closer to the Ba'th and hobnobbed with its leaders. On 5 August he abruptly sounded a new note. He called, in a rather incidental manner, for "a republic within *(ḍimn)* the U.A.R."[14] On the seventh he reiterated the formula with more pointedness,[15] but did not elaborate. He simply emphasized and thenceforward more insistently that the Iraqi republic "is an indivisible part of the Arab nation," that "the Arab nation is one people," and that "unity will be realized, God willing."[16]

‘Āref’s unabating ardor for pan-Arabism produced a very tense atmosphere. It raised high hopes, excited widespread fears, and brought all latent differences between Iraqis into the open, deepening and envenoming them.

The irrepressible ‘Āref had, in all probability, no notion of the full meaning of the challenge he and the Ba‘th threw down. A synthesis with the U.A.R. implied a sharper turn in the life of Iraq and the Near East than that involved in the Revolution of July 14. It would have innovated upon many a condition, and threatened many a vested local and international interest. Every force with a stake in a fragmented Arab people was, sooner or later, bound to resist it. As it was, the founding of the U.A.R. had caused no little misgiving among the big powers with a footing in the area. The prospect of its expansion rendered them even more uneasy. Israel, Iran, the oil interests, and all the Arab kinglings and shaikhs felt, for their part, positively menaced. The project had also strong opponents in Iraq itself. The Shī‘ī majority did not, in its bulk, care to be integrated in what appeared in its eyes as a state of a predominantly Sunnī coloring, even though neither Nāṣir nor the leaders of the Ba‘th in Iraq–ar-Rikābī and Ḥammādī were both of a Shī‘ī extraction–ever thought in narrow sectarian terms. The important Kurdish community did not also relish the likelihood of a vindication of the Arab idea, fearing as it did its own decline into an ineffective minority. Even in the army, which was for long the stronghold of the most steadfast pan-Arabism, there had always been a distinct particularist trend. It embraced officers of Kurdish, Turkoman, or mixed ethnic origin, or Arab officers–Shī‘ī or Sunnī–who, for one reason or another, desired no change in the existing distribution of social power.

Qāsim, who before the Revolution had left the dominant pan-Arab inclined segment of the Free Officers with the impression that he shared its feelings, did not after July 14 immediately take a position one way or the other. “Union” he declared on July 27, “is something not for one individual but for the peoples of the Arab states to decide.”[17] Later he gave nationalist officers reason to think that he was not against union, but against a headlong rush into it.[18] By the end of the summer of 1958, however, no one could mistake that Qāsim had thrown his weight on the side of particularism and become the center of its hopes, even if he went on asserting that he was “above trends and inclinations.”[19]

The National Democrats, while protesting their eagerness for the entry of Iraq into a federation with the U.A.R. upon a guarantee of a free party life and other democratic liberties,[20] rallied in effect to Qāsim. But the most powerful and, in the event, conclusive support for him came from the Iraqi Communist party.

The party was not particularist in any fundamental sense. The concept of communism and that of Arab unity are not necessarily antithetical, however different their philosophical underpinnings. In their days, Marx and Engels, arguing from "the interests of the proletariat" opposed "the perpetuation of the division [of their native land] into petty states" and stood unambiguously for "a single, indivisible, democratic German Republic."[21] But one does not have to go back to the fathers of the movement in order to prove the point. It is more than amply confirmed by the attitudes that the party took in the past toward the Arab question. A rapid review of these attitudes would make it easier to see the behavior of the party in 1958 in its true perspective.

In its beginnings, the party was oriented upon a pan-Arab course. This is evidenced in the character of the first auxiliary association that it sponsored–the clamorous but ineffectual Jamʻiyyat al-Aḥrār (The Association of Liberals). "To regard all Arab countries as one country"[22] was a basic item in the program that the association published in 1929, and to give point, as it were, to its dedication to this ideal, it had its followers, as an earnest of their loyalty, go through the ritual of making oath upon "the honor of Arabism."[23] Consistently enough, it also made known its intention to spread its principles "in all the Arab lands."[24] In fact, its very appearance in Iraq denoted the forging, however tenuously, of an overt inter-Arab organizational link; for in Syria, and on the self-same sentiments, had been thriving from 1925 a parent society of the same name. When in late 1929 the Iraqi Jamʻiyyat al-Aḥrār precipitated, by its rash conduct, its own ruin, its Syrian counterpart carried on for a few more years, but renamed itself al-Wifāq al-ʻArabī (The Arab Accord)–a step calculated to give added emphasis to its pan-Arab character.

This partiality for pan-Arabism–which, by the way, reflected less the appeal that the idea exerted in the eastern Arab lands than the interest taken in it at the time by the Soviet and world Communists[25]–did not simply

characterize the less orthodox Communist endeavors. It is discernible, though in a sharply radicalized form, in the first placards to appear in Iraq with the symbol of the hammer and sickle, and which were posted in Nāṣiriyyah on the night of December 13, 1932. The placards held up the watchword "Long Live the Union of Workers' and Peasants' Republics of the Arab Countries."[26] The watchword was not something hastily thrown out by some novice in the as yet unfledged local movement. It was put forward a year before in a resolution adopted at a joint conference of the Communist Parties of Syria and Palestine[27] and, in its unreality–the fanciful reference to "Workers' and Peasants' Republics"–mirrored the extreme radical line enjoined in 1928 by the Sixth Congress of the Comintern. The resolution in question, it must be added, made it utterly clear that the union toward which the Communists had to steer their course was to be "voluntary" and "federal," and to subsume "the complete national-state independence" of the Arab countries adhering to it.[28]

At the first touch of realism, the expression "Workers' and Peasants' Republics" evaporated, but the formula, relating to a voluntary and federal Arab union, survived. A conference of the Arab Communist parties, held in the autumn of 1935, reaffirmed it. Writing on the conference from memory eight years afterwards, and without referring once to the earlier resolution, the secretary general of the Iraqi Communist party maintained that

> the delegates, having studied the [Arab] question from every side, came to the conclusion that the slogan of "Arab Unity" *[al-Waḥdah al-'Arabiyyah]* was unworkable owing to the uneven development of the Arab countries . . . and the unwillingness of the kings and amirs to abandon their thrones. . . . The delegates resolved, therefore, . . .to hold up a realizable watchword . . . and settled on "Arab Federation" *(al-Ittiḥad al-'Arabī)*, that is, on advocating a voluntary federal union embracing the independent Arab countries.[29]

The party did not, however, hail with enthusiasm the discussions that began in 1942 and culminated, three years later, in the founding of the Arab League. It could not ignore in that regard the initiatory role of Anthony Eden, the British foreign secretary, and feared lest the coalition in view

should be turned into a vehicle for anti-Soviet policies. It therefore set itself squarely against “a union of kings,” or one with “aggressive” aims, or which would be manipulated by the imperialists, or used in any manner against one of the states belonging to “the Front of the United Nations.” Instead it called for “a union that would draw its strength from the Arab people . . . and from the international democratic movement,” and would incorporate only the Arab countries that enjoyed true sovereignty and practiced democracy “in deed and not in word. “[30]

When eventually, in 1945, the Arab League came into being, the party retreated to a position of watchful wariness which, on occasions in 1946-1947, gave way to one of open but restrained criticism. Later, the party became too absorbed in the *Wathbah* and its sequel, and then had to live through repressive blows of such a scale that it had no time to worry about the League which, at any rate, proved to be neither anti-Soviet in essence, nor of much account in real power terms. Pan-Arab enthusiasts had themselves grown disenchanted with it, and identified it more and more with the rival particularist trend.

Nevertheless, the party was now as far from the pan-Arab position as ever. The attitude it had to take in 1948 with regard to Palestine estranged it from nationalists of every coloring in the deepest possible manner. Simultaneously, and for the same reason, it suffered a sharp decline in its Arab membership. This no doubt facilitated the rise of the Kurds in 1949 to the highest places in the party which, in turn, explains, to a large degree, why throughout the first half of the fifties the party paid very little attention to Arab issues. To feel in such issues an interest which is genuine and unforced was, it goes without saying, temperamentally difficult for Kurds, whatever their persuasion. But there was also another influence at work. The logic of the “Cold War,” which carried Communists everywhere far to the left, increased the distance between them and all the “national-bourgeois” parties, including the pan-Arabists. In 1949, E. Zhukov, the Soviet specialist on oriental affairs, tied the hastening of “the process of social and national liberation of the peoples of colonial and dependent countries” to “the pitiless denunciation of the reactionary national-bourgeois ideology in its various forms, be it Kemalism or Gandhism, Zionism or Pan-Arabism.”[31] It is scarcely necessary to add that, at least as far as Iraq was concerned, this line of thought badly harmonized with the

living human situation. Even the most superficial glance at the facts would have revealed that pan-Arabism embraced diverse political forces, some traditional, others radicalist in complexion, and that the traditional forces were already on the wane.

The mood to which Zhukov gave voice gradually faded out, and in 1955 the interest of the Iraqi Communist party in the pan-Arab cause revived. Behind the change in its attitude lay the "Thaw," the shedding by the Russians of their left theories, their recognition of the "third camp," the passage of the leadership of the pan-Arab movement from conservative to revolutionary hands, the dangers for nationalists and Communists inherent in the Baghdād Pact, the turning of Egypt and Syria to the Soviet Union for military and economic assistance, the edging of the Syrian Ba'th toward the Syrian Communists, the sharpening of pan-Arab feelings engendered by the rise of Nāṣir in popular favor, and the arabization of the command of the Iraqi Communist party.

The Communists began now facing determinedly toward the nationalists, and in 1956 reinscribed Arab unity on their banners.[32] They, however, linked the attainment of the idea to the realization of "democratic reforms." In clearer terms, they admitted only of a unity which would countenance, at the very least, their right to exist. More than that, they made unity conditional upon the overthrow of imperialism in the Arab countries which, in effect, meant that they did not view unity as an immediate historic task. Indeed, at the time unity seemed to be nowhere on the horizon.

But in the latter part of 1957, the horizon suddenly changed. What had appeared as an academic idea became overnight a practical principle. In neighboring Syria, the Ba'th posed the question of a federal link with Egypt in an extremely sharp manner and as a thing of extraordinary urgency.

The move was wholly in accord with that party's pan-Arab perspective, but at the same time grew directly out of the state of its relations with the Communists. The uneasy and informal alliance that held together the Ba'th and the followers of Khālid Bakdāsh from 1955 to mid-1957 and enabled them to push Syria's traditional forces into the background had dissolved. Bakdāsh no longer thought, as he did in May 1956, that "an entente between the two great popular and patriotic parties, the Communist and the Arab Socialist Ba'th" was historically obligatory.[33] The leaders of the Ba'th, for their part, had had their reservations all along. In an internal publication

circulated in January 1956, they took pains to emphasize that communism, with its international affinities, was wholly uncongenial to their way of thought, that strictly speaking there was no Ba‘thi “co-operation” with the Communists, but merely a temporary “concurrence” of two otherwise incompatible lines of action. While appreciating the need, in matters of tactics, for “realism, flexibility, and a regard for circumstances,” they warned that the “danger” of the Communists mounted, the nearer their policies approximated Arab interests, for this could only add to the ease with which they would affect minds unarmed with the necessary Ba‘thi generalizations: along with slogans perfectly congruent with nationalism would filter through “Communist doctrinal formulas that are of longer range and deeper significance than any accidental meeting of political attitudes.”[34]

But the developments which inspired the anxiety that began to weigh upon the leaders of the Ba‘th in 1957 were of a more practical and immediate character. Popular gratitude for the help that the Soviet Union extended to Egypt and Syria had redounded in conscious sympathy for the Communists. Their social support grew immensely. Under the impulse of pressures by the Baghdād Pact powers, a people’s resistance force thick with Communist organizers entered upon the stage. More ominous, from the point of view of the Ba‘th, was the gravitation toward the Communists of an important group of officers, the “Neutralists,” led by Brigadier Amīn an-Nafūrī, deputy chief of staff, and Lieutenant Colonel Aḥmad ‘Abd-ul-Karīm, the head of the Third Bureau (Operations), even as Khālid al-‘Azm, an old-style aristocratic landowner and the deputy premier and minister of defence and finance coquetted with Khālid Bakdāsh. The Ba‘th, which had its own man, Lieutenant Colonel Muṣṭafa Ḥamdūn, at the head of the First Bureau (Personnel) and an ally, Lieutenant Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Hamīd as-Sarrāj, as chief of the Second Bureau (Military Intelligence), clearly feared being outmaneuvered by the new coalition, to which also belonged Major General ‘Afīf al-Bizrī, the chief of staff and a confirmed Communist sympathizer.[35]

The turn of events would not have been so menacing to the Ba‘th, had the party not been simultaneously going through a severe inner crisis. A restricted report, prepared by an extraordinary party committee in July 1957, revealed that the rank-and-file members were torn between “different

currents, some of which accord with Marxist interpretations while others harmonize with Nazism or fascism or with Western European socialism . . . or with the principles of the Egyptian . . . or the Algerian revolution." Over and above that, "in the minds of many the meaning of the 'Arab mission' has become confused with Islam." The report also drew a picture of an advanced state of moral disintegration. It referred to the "breakdown of discipline," to "chaos" in the ranks, and to a widespread spirit of "self-centeredness" and "egotism." "We sacrificed a great deal for the party but got nothing out of it." "Were it not for the party, we would have been freer and better off." So ran the complaints again and again. The party had in effect turned into "an alien social institution." The report went on to lament "the profound chasm" that divided the leaders and the members at large. "The leaders . . .act in isolation from the party . . . and view it as a heavy burden and a hindrance to their freedom." In the ranks, doubt and defeatism had grown so rampant that they extended to the question of "the existence of the party itself: is it worthy of enduring or is it an experiment doomed to inevitable failure?"[36]

To this highly expressive report must be added the apposite remark made by 'Abd-un-Nāṣir years later, in March 1963, during the trilateral negotiations for a federal Arab union. Said 'Abd-un-Nāṣir, addressing the leaders of the Ba'th: "My information about the party at the time of the unity talks–those held in January 1958–was that it had problems which were almost insuperable . . . and we all imagined that you yourselves desired its dissolution."[37]

Whatever may have been in the mind of the Ba'thi leaders with regard to their party,[38] it is quite evident that at this critical point they fastened upon a constitutional link with Egypt as upon an anchor of deliverance, and had no difficulty in rousing the people and fanning the flame of pan-Arab passion.

The situation now changed as abruptly as the shifting of the scenes on the stage. Bakdāsh grasped the essence of the new development at once. The threat in the direction of his party was unambiguous. The Ba'thi leaders could well invoke, in the eventuality of a union, the anti-Communist Egyptian laws in order to disperse his following without themselves bearing responsibility. At first he reacted by trying to mend his bridges with the Ba'th. On December 31, 1957, he warned against "attempts by American imperialism" to create differences between the Ba'th and the Communists.[39]

Later he put it about in an informal manner and through Dr. Badr-id-Dīn as-Sibā‘ī, a member of the Ḥoms Local Party Committee, that all the shouting about a federation with Egypt was merely a screen that concealed the desire of the Ba‘th “to monopolize power” and that “the Communists have their eyes wide open and will not allow the Ba‘th to play them false behind their backs.”[40] But at the popular level the wave in favor of union was sweeping up very high, and obviously called for more imaginative tactics. On January 11, 1958, apparently with Bakdāsh’s knowledge, the Communist-inclined General al-Bizrī and the “neutralist” Brigadier an-Nafūrī and Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Karīm, taking the Ba‘th utterly by surprise, persuaded the Army Command Council into an appeal for a complete and immediate merger with Egypt. The appeal, which was included in a note that a delegation of the council submitted the next day to ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir, proceeded, significantly enough, from an internationalist premise. “Whereas,” it read,

> the present circumstances, which have arisen out of the victory of our Arab people in Egypt and Syria, have tied, in a great measure, our Arab cause to world peace and have opened up an opportunity for speedy and positive steps by us concordant with the importance of our victories, and in view of the possibility of a change in these circumstances, particularly should the imperialists achieve a state of readiness enabling them to risk a local or world war, their vital interests in the Arab homeland being in jeopardy, we, therefore, call for the necessity of determining, with dispatch, the fundamental structure of a comprehensive unity with Egypt and of carrying the thing through right away.[41]

Bakdāsh’s ally, Deputy Premier al-‘Azm, was quick to take up the cry in public, maintaining that a merger was “more natural” than a federation.[42] The Ba‘th did not hide that it saw through the maneuver. The intention to “obstruct” the union talks was too patent.[43] However, the officers associated with the party, being cornered, had adhered unqualifiedly to the appeal of the army command, and the rest of the membership now followed suit.

Bakdāsh himself took up a formal position different than that of al-‘Azm. In a statement published on January 13, his party appealed to the Egyptian

and Syrian governments to set up a joint committee to consider “forms of union” in the light of “the objective circumstances in the two countries.” The party also stressed the need to build the union on “national-democratic foundations” and in such a manner as would “close every breach” in the face of enemies, and would “attract the popular masses in the other Arab countries toward a strengthening of their struggle for liberation and unity.” Beyond that, the party gave voice to its faith that the contemplated union would “consolidate the existence of the two liberated Arab republics and increase their weight in international life for the benefit of the Arab cause and world peace.”[44] This last passage strongly suggests that Bakdāsh hoped for nothing more than a loose confederal arrangement.

But Bakdāsh was out of harmony with the spirit of the drama that was now hastening to its unforgettable climax. As often happens in history, the outcome was quite different from the initial aims of the forces that produced it. On January 19 ʻAbd-un-Nāṣir accepted what no one had originally desired–the Baʻth, the Communists, their allies, or he himself. Total merger was decided upon, and to merger were tied the dissolution of the parties and the depoliticizing of the army.

The conclusion was from this point foregone, and could no longer be fought off. But Bakdāsh remained in an oppositional mood. “No Communist party in the world has ever dissolved itself,” he declared defiantly on January 28.[45] At about the same time, he assured the “neutralist” group of army officers, as has since been disclosed by one of them–Lt. Col. Aḥmad ʻAbd-ul-Karīm–that the unity in view was no surprise to America and the other Western powers, but had their approval, affording, as it did, the possibility of annihilating “the progressive movement in Syria”–something that “the conspiracies, pressures, and the straightforward aggression” of the imperialists had failed to accomplish.[46]

However, on February 2, the day after Egypt and Syria officially proclaimed their unity, Bakdāsh, adapting his line of conduct to the altering circumstances, but apparently also bowing to a current of opinion within his own party, redefined his position. “It is true,” he said,

> that . . . we have had our view as to the form of union between Egypt and Syria. . . . Understandably some frogs hastened to put a false construction on this in order to delude the public into the belief that the

> Arab Communists are against Arab unity on principle. . . . But the croaking of frogs remained a croaking of frogs . . . and did not mislead the masses of the people. . . .
>
> We, the Communists of Syria, have, before the founding of the United Arab Republic, lent our support to the basic lines of Egyptian and Syrian policy. What has changed now? . . . What we worked for and struggled for previously, we will work for and struggle for under the aegis of the unified Arab state. We will pursue no other course.[47]

All the same, when the Chamber of Deputies met on February 5 to ratify the constituent principles of the new republic, Bakdāsh did not show up. Four years later, a central organ of the party would describe this gesture as "the first warning to the people against the faulty basis of the union."[48] But at the time the rank-and-file Communists, who were in mood much closer to the masses, would appear to have, in their greater number, objected to Bakdāsh's behavior.[49] Some of them would soon leave the party altogether and for good. Even the more steadfast voted overwhelmingly in favor of the merger and the presidency of ʻAbd-un-Nāṣir in the plebiscite that took place on February 21. This did not, however, save them from suppression and legal nullity. The discomfiture of communism in Syria was, in fact, well-nigh complete.

This dénouement was not lost on the Communists in Iraq, who had all this while been watching and assimilating what was going on and drawing the inevitable inferences.

Naturally, a certain coldness crept henceforth into their relations with the Iraqi Baʻthists, but for the time being they did not turn their backs on them. On the contrary, they continued to act inside the Front of National Union as they had previously acted. With the Baghdād Pact still a reality and Nūrī as-Saʻīd very much alive, no other sensible line seemed open to them. They went even farther: in April 1958 they gave their support to a resolution of the front favoring a federal link with the United Arab Republic.[50]

But the fall of the monarchy on 14 July altered the whole aspect of things. Many of the political premises changed and with the premises, the aims, moods, and interrelationships of the various parties. The incompatibilities in the life interests of the nationalists and the Communists would have risen to the surface sooner or later, but were actually thrown

into the sharpest relief in the very first weeks of the Revolution when the Ba‘th, impelled, as already noted, by the logic of its position in Syria, posed merger with the U.A.R. as the task of the day. This in itself would have been enough to cause a certain uneasiness among the Communists. But when next Colonel ‘Āref, leaping to the foreground, set about exciting the enthusiasm of the people and army for ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir, a keen anxiety took hold of them. They had no illusion as to what a merger would portend for their party. An underground existence under ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir could never be quite the same as an underground existence under Nūrī as-Sa‘īd. Their very survival as an effective historical force was at issue. They therefore interpreted the initiative of ‘Āref and the Ba‘th as nothing less than a summons to mortal conflict. On the seventh of August, with the blessing of Qāsim, who, for reasons of his own, scarcely relished the prospect of a repetition in Baghdād of what happened in Damascus, the Communists descended into the streets of the capital in strength. It was a mere display of muscle, but revealed in an irrefutable manner the power they had over the masses of the workers and the poor. “Hundreds of thousands” of people took part in the manifestation, according to the contemporary *Al-Bilād*,[51] which had not yet unequivocally chosen sides.[52] An official but pro-Communist source later put the figure at “about half a million.”[53] The manifestation, which was to usher in a wave of extraordinary turmoil, was, at any rate, sufficiently impressive to shake the Ba‘th and like-minded nationalists badly. Of course, not all the demonstrators were under Communist influence. The Kurdish Democrats and the National Democrats played a role. Qāsim’s favor counted also for a great deal. But the Communists far outdistanced the other elements, at least in their organizational resources, and the direct leadership was manifestly in their hands.

The chief slogan under which the Communists marched on that day ran: “A Federal Union and Soviet Friendship!” In its first part, the slogan–unlike the shout of “Unity” that the Ba‘th sent up–harmonized with the purpose by which the National Front had laid its course. But the federalism of the Communists was in truth a mere formality. While strictly keeping the word, they had essentially rejected the idea, at least for the immediate future. There was more than a hint of that in the memorandum which they had submitted to Qāsim on the evening of July 14 and in which they expressed

themselves as favoring federal relations “with the U.A.R. and the Yemen,”[54] thus leaving Qāsim with the inference that they desired only a link of the most unsubstantial kind. The “United Arab States,” in which the U.A.R. and the Yemen met was, as Qāsim well knew, nothing more than a façade. Perhaps some scent had already reached the Communists of Qāsim’s particularist feelings–a thing that escaped even the most intimate of his nationalist associates. Significantly enough, in the statement that they simultaneously addressed to the people, they treaded more delicately, speaking only of “a federal union with the U.A.R.” and making no mention of the Yemen whatever.[55]

As political lines sharpened and the discord between Qāsim and ‘Āref grew keener, the Communists became more outspoken. In a declaration placarded on 3 September 1958 throughout Baghdād, they warned that “the proponents of a merger with the U.A.R.” were getting ready to carry their plan through “in spite of the absence of any decision or inclination in this sense on the part of the government of the Republic or the commanders of the army.” Acting “apart from the people,” they intended, “in a very short time to take the national forces and the masses by surprise and place them before an accomplished fact.” From this the Communists led up, not without a degree of caution, to a criticism of the U.A.R. “It is extremely helpful,” they maintained,

> to weigh the experience of the unity between Egypt and Syria . . . which, if attended by positive achievements, has also yielded negative results. . . .
>
> Today . . . when the masses of the Iraqi people . . . hear of the [proposed] merger, . . .they are filled with uneasiness . . . on account of the want of freedom of opinion and of party and social organization in the U.A.R. . . .
>
> The Kurdish people . . . too is worried about the fate of its national rights. . . .
>
> The Iraqi army and its brave officers . . . cannot, for their part, but be perturbed about the way in which the [Egyptian and Syrian] armies were united. . . .
>
> Undoubtedly cooperation between the economies of Iraq and the U.A.R. is possible to the utmost limits . . . but their merger . . . [could

only] narrow the opportunities of the retarded Iraqi economy. . . .

It is an error to say that before such a great objective as unity . . . negative results, however serious, dwindle in importance or that the interest of the part could be sacrificed in the interest of the whole, for if a merger would have an unfavorable effect on Iraq and would neither serve democracy in the U.A.R. itself nor attract the sentiments of the other Arab peoples, what great interest could impel us towards it?

At the same time, the Communists affirmed that they were of the opinion that the Arab nation was making "wide strides" towards "a democratic federal republic" extending "from the Arab Gulf to the Atlantic Ocean," but insisted that this republic could not be realized unless the peoples of the various Arab countries determined for themselves "by genuine democratic means and without pressure or interference" their interest in building it. The Revolution of July, they went on, "has opened up a great possibility in favor of emancipated Arab unity, and it is not to the good of Iraq or of the Arab cause to abort this possibility by having recourse to sentimental and impromptu measures." The "best step" that Iraq could take in the existing circumstances was "to accede to the union . . . which has been created between the Yemen and the U.A.R.," the Communists concluded.[56]

Later, on 13 February 1959, more than four months after ʻĀref 's downfall, ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah, a member of the Politbureau and the party's foremost ideologist, gave, in a lengthy public lecture, an elaborate theoretic defense of the Communist position, together with a forecast on dialectical lines of the future course of "the movement toward Arab unity." "The problem of unifying the Arab nation," he affirmed, "cannot be abstracted from its real world and lifted to a world of dreams." Unification is a complicated, objectively conditioned process. By virtue of differences in their material and cultural life, the various Arab countries "do not proceed at the same pace, either in the general movement of their evolution or in their march toward unity." They will, therefore, be ripe for union at different points of time. The forms of union will also, in each case, "vary in strength and degree of comprehensiveness," and ought to be "the most natural" in the given circumstances, that is, conducive to "the release of the utmost energy for the forward march of the particular Arab country and,

consequently, of the entire Arab procession." These differing forms will not be rigid or immobile but "will gradually grow into higher forms" and "draw closer to one another" until ultimately, under favorable international conditions, an "all-embracing Arab union" is attained. Obviously ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah assumed as given that the Arab countries are all in the long run tending toward one common point–unity–and gave no thought to the likelihood of alternative or reverse directions. He most probably made this assumption for purely political purposes. For apparently the same reason, he operated the dialectic badly: his argument tended to underestimate antithetical tendencies and, in its substance and culmination, worked more in the sense of Hegel than of Marx.

In the same lecture, ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah made a point of disputing the nationalists upon their claim of a "monopoly" over the struggle for Arab unity. The Arab unity movement was "the movement of all the Arabs," he roundly declared. "It will not have," he went on,

> one single center or one single nucleus–neither the U.A.R. nor the Iraqi Republic. . . . Consequently, it will not have one single leader–neither Jamāl ʻAbd-un-Nāṣir nor ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim. . . . And it will not be solved by one party or one government . . . but as a result of an arduous general struggle in which all the Arab peoples, with all their classes, parties, and leaders, regardless of their ideologies and political programs, will take part.[57]

All this formed but one side of the position of the Communists, the phraseological one. In practice, they had been steering an out-and-out particularist course. This became clear beyond a shadow of doubt from the second week of October 1958, when they appropriated the antiunionist cry of "Sole Leader" and set themselves the task of popularizing it to the limit.

The conflict between nationalists and particularists, which at more than one point found expression in violent clashes between the Baʻth and the Communist party, led, in the short run, to a number of important political results.

In the first place, the pan-Arab trend met with a clear but indecisive defeat. To this pointed a rapid series of widely known events: the removal on September 12, 1958, of ʻĀref from his post as assistant commander-in-chief of the armed forces; his loss of his jobs as deputy premier and minister of interior on September 30; his appointment to the embassy in Bonn on October 12 after his unsuccessful attempt upon the life of Qāsim; his arrest on November 4 on account of his "unauthorized" return to Baghdād and for his "repeated endeavors to disturb the public peace";[58] the closure on November 7 of *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, a mouthpiece of the Baʻth, and the apprehension of its editorial staff; the scattering on December 8 of the ill-founded "conspiracy" led by the old-style nationalist Rashīd ʻAlī al-Gailānī; the trial of ʻĀref *in camera* in the last week of December, and the passing upon him on February 5, 1959, of the sentence of death, but with a recommendation for clemency; the resignation on February 7 of the nationalist members of Qāsim's cabinet; and, finally, the collapse of the March 8 military revolt at Mosul.[59] The year 1963 would give proof of the indecisiveness of this sequence of nationalist frustrations.

In the second place, the cloudiness that permeated authority at its highest point in the first months of the Revolution dissolved: state power passed unequivocally into the hands of Qāsim.

Simultaneously, at the popular level the Communists, beating back one obstacle after another, swept to conspicuous and immense strength, surrounding, in the process, state institutions with organs of power of their own making.

If one sought to account for these developments one would have, first of all, to bring back to mind that pan-Arabism was not in Iraq an idea as received and uncontradicted as in Syria: although it counted not a few Shīʻī devotees, for its mass support it could draw only upon Sunnī Arabs, who formed but one-fifth of the population. This, however, was to some extent outweighed by the fact that the officer corps and the Free Officers were, in their greater number, Arab Sunnī by extraction and pan-Arab by sympathy. At bottom, the problem of the nationalists lay in their incoherence as a political force: they represented a maze of jealous and discordant groups with roots in the different segments of the Sunnī middle classes–students, lawyers, writers, army officers, petty traders, wealthy merchants, and so

on–and with a wide spectrum of opinion ranging from a wobbling, indefinite left to the extreme right. In addition to the Ba‘th, the Independents, and the Arab Nationalists, there were the incidental groups, like the Nationalist Rally, the Nationalist League, and the diminutive faction that for a time gravitated around Rashīd ‘Alī al-Gailānī. Over and above that, the classes overthrown by the Revolution–the greater tribal shaikhs and other big landowners–heartened by the division of the new forces, began seeking a comeback, but under pan-Arab banners which made for no little confusion. Even within one and the same nationalist party, a union of wills could not always be achieved. For example, Ṣiddīq Shanshal, the secretary of the Independence party, was for going slow on the question of unity, whereas Fā’iq as-Sāmarrā’ī, its vice-president, sided with the Ba‘th in pressing for immediate merger with the U.A.R. Again, the command of the Ba‘th, unable to agree, after the fall of ‘Āref, on a common policy towards Qāsim, split off: ar-Rikābī, the party’s secretary, preferred not to cut all ties with Qāsim and remained in his post as minister of state, while his colleagues insisted on his withdrawal from the government.[60] At the same time, no real harmony reigned between the military and civilian nationalists. ‘Āref, apparently apprehensive lest Rashīd ‘Alī play first fiddle, unsuccessfully opposed his return from exile.[61] Ṣiddīq Shanshal could not hide his misgivings concerning ’Āref from Waldemar J. Gallman, the American ambassador.[62] Rashīd ‘Alī complained: “These army men of ours . . . what do they know? . . . They can’t make anything of the simplest of diplomatic rules. . . . This country is not theirs exclusively; blunders do not concern them alone.”[63] The nationalist Free Officers, for their part, had no identity of feelings or mutual confidence. Some were for ‘Āref all the way; others shared his pan-Arab but not his social outlook, or simply objected to his hasty methods; still others envied him his fame or deplored his airs of greatness, and drew comfort from his downfall.

In a way, the nationalists were unfortunate in ‘Āref, in whom their whole movement became, with the advent of the Revolution, suddenly concentrated. ‘Āref was a man of strong passion, and seemed at his ease only in extremes. Often he acted from impulse rather than upon thought. If, in 1963 and after, he would show considerable skill as a political maneuverer, in 1958, with his as yet weak sense of current Iraqi realities, he used with little discretion the power that the Revolution had brought him.

His chief liability was his unbridled radical rhetoric. In many speeches in the provinces he gave voice to incomplete egalitarian ideas in an elemental and extremely guileless manner, going far beyond the feeling of the majority of the nationalist officers. “Henceforth,” he told tens of thousands of people at Najaf, “there shall be no feudalism, no rich and no poor, no disparities and no classes. You are all God’s creatures!” He repeated these words in many keys everywhere he went. At Dīwāniyyah he said to the crowds: “This republic is your republic, a popular, patriotic, socialist republic. . . . The sons of the people now represent the people in the service of the people. . . . Rejoice, therefore O peasant, rejoice O worker, rejoice O son of the country! . . . Rejoice at the coming of freedom, brotherhood, justice, and equality!” At Mosul he placed on a par the well-to-do quarter of Bāb as-Sarāy with the plebeian quarter of Bāb al-Baid. At Kūt, noticing that the authorities had seated the notables in a ventilated meeting hall and confined the multitudes to an open courtyard, he spoke in the courtyard to the “real sons of the people” then entered the hall and declared: “Brethren! It is not of the principles of the republic to address the élite, for this a people’ republic . . . [which admits of] no differences, no privileges, and no ranks. . . . The people is one. . . . The republic is one!”[64] ‘Āref seemed to be calling into question, possibly without intending it, the entire social system. Property owners, and nationalist property owners no less, grew uneasy. “I sensed,” said later, at ‘Āref’s trial, Staff Brigadier Aḥmad Ṣāleḥ al-‘Abdī, the military governor general,

> that some people, on hearing his speeches, took alarm. They imagined that no palaces and no other things signified the seizure of property.
> *The President of the Court:* Did this affect the market?
> *The Witness:* I believe it did.[65]

In fact, ‘Āref’s speeches breathed a spirit of initiative into the peasants. Many of them put down their hoes. Others, especially in ‘Amārah and Kūt, began taking possession of the land or sacking the estates of the shaikhs. At the same time, in the towns the restlessness of the laborers and the poor increased. Naturally, affluent nationalists ceased to cherish amiable thoughts concerning ‘Āref, and the more the latter talked, the more his political base in the officer corps thinned. This made it easier in the end for

Qāsim to pull him down. ʻĀref had unwittingly hurtled against the objective interests of important classes, and the interests proved too formidable. Even the Communists, who turned to account the revolutionary fervor he had whipped up, shook their heads at him because, as ʻAzīz al-Ḥājj, a candidate member of the Central Committee, explained, "the objective and subjective conditions" for "a socialist republic and the abolition of classes" had not "ripened" and because ʻĀref's slogans entailed in effect "the throwing of patriotic social strata into the lap of imperialism."[66]

At his trial ʻĀref–whom many Iraqis at the time compared to "a butterfly that had rushed to the light and burned itself"–would assert that what he said in his speeches to the people he said "in good faith and out of a simpleness of heart." He would also ask: "If my words did not accord with the policy of the government, why was I not restrained after my first tour of the provinces? Why was I not restrained after my second tour or after they got wise to the thing, seeing, in particular, that I am new to politics?"[67] Rather than pulling in on him, Qāsim actually gave him the reins: he simply had no interest in shielding him from the ill will that his own words could not but have brought down upon his head. Qāsim possessed the art of rendering him whom he would ruin unacceptable by his own acts. In more general terms, he had a great deal of cunning. This was perhaps his chief resource. He was also a very careful mover. While ʻĀref was overtalking himself, he, on his side, was gradually and quietly easing him out of his power. His first step came soon after the July 14 coup, and may or may not have been politically motivated: in answer to the landing of American marines in Lebanon and British parachutists in Jordan, Qāsim ordered the whole of the Fourth Armored Division, including the armored regiment commanded by ʻĀref's brother, from its encampment just east of Baghdād to H3, not far from the Jordanian frontiers.[68] The orders did not go out in his name, but in that of Staff Colonel ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, the director of military operations. Qāsim next sought to alienate ʻĀref from the more prominent of the Free Officers by throwing on him alone the responsibility for laying aside the idea of a revolutionary command council,[69] although he himself had beyond doubt a hand in the decision.[70] In early September, or shortly before smoothly relieving ʻĀref from his military commands, Qāsim transferred from the capital many of the officers of ʻĀref's own Twentieth

Infantry Brigade.[71] When finally, at the end of September, he removed him from his political posts, he simultaneously removed his brigade to Jalawlā', some 140 kilometers to the northeast of Baghdād. Most significative of the times was the passing of the command of the brigade's Third Battalion, which ʻĀref once led, to Colonel Ḥasan ʻAbbūd Ibrahīm, a Communist,[72] and of the brigade itself to Staff Colonel Hāshim ʻAbd-uj-Jabbār, also a Communist.[73]

There were other sides to Qāsim's character that aided him in his rivalry with ʻĀref. The bad in him, it should be remembered, had not yet grown to maturity, as after his drift into personal dictatorship. There was in those days still no sign of his capriciousness or erraticism. His own destiny as providential leader of Iraq had not yet become his main passion in life–really the after-effect of his attempted assassination in the streets on October 19, 1959. Friend and foe still recognized that he was humble, dedicated, intense, hardworking, ascetic, and incorruptible. Reflective of Qāsim at this stage is a remark he made one November day in 1958 to Muḥammad Hadīd, his minister of finance. Coming out of a congress of lawyers at Baghdād Hotel, where his praises had been sung in every tone, he turned to Ḥadīd and said: "Abū Haitham, I truly fear that I should be stricken by vanity."[74] In a congruent vein is the image given of Qāsim by Hāshim Jawād, his minister of foreign affairs from 1959 to 1963. "At the beginning," Jawād relates,

> Qāsim was accessible, open-minded, and very anxious to learn. . . . But events brought more and more power into his hands. . . . I still recall how, in the months after the abortive Mosul coup when confusion reigned in the administrative apparatus, ministers would not take any initiative or decide on anything without referring to him. . . . And so the unopiniated, unassuming Qāsim whom I knew in 1958 gradually got the taste of being the only man in the country. In other words, we built a dictator. . . . Our people are in truth builders of dictators.[75]

One characteristic of the Qāsim of 1958 that Hāshim Jawād does not mention, and which distinguished him sharply from ʻĀref and had its

weight in the play of power, was his reticence. Except on uncontroversial matters, precisely where he stood remained for many crucial weeks after the Revolution something of a mystery. On some issues he did not commit himself to any opinion simply because he had no considered opinion of his own. On other issues he kept his opinion to himself because he felt safer that way. As the army officers were on any one issue of different minds, his reserve worked in his favor. Incidentally, in those weeks he wanted so badly to gain the goodwill of every social force that he put out various stories as to his kinship: to the Sunnīs he said he was Sunnī, to the Shī‘īs, Shī‘ī, and to the Kurds, Lurish, that is, a Failiyyah Kurd from the south of Iraq. Only slowly did he allow his real intentions to show and in many respects never fully: a certain indefiniteness continued to characterize his regime to the very end.

However, when he felt firm ground under him, he could be sufficiently unambiguous. Thus on the social question he early took a distinct middle course. “The conditions of living of the poor,” he declared on September 30, 1958, the day ‘Āref fell, “must be raised to a level of honorable human living without intentionally decreasing the just standard of living of the rich.”[76] This was no passing thought of his, but a note that he would strike again and again,[77] and which perhaps expressed a side of his own essence: he was of a middle condition but had tasted the bitterness of poverty; his father possessed in his old age a small barley farm on the Tigris, but had begun as a humble worker-carpenter. However, in this Qāsim, primed by Muḥammad Ḥadīd, the well-known affluent industrial executive and the chief of his economic and fiscal advisers, was also clearly bidding for the support of the propertied middle classes whom ‘Āref had, with his declamatory socialism, unwittingly alienated.

In line with that ideal–really a variety of the ancient notion that things are best in the mean–was the agrarian reform that Qāsim proclaimed on that same September 30. The reform limited the holdings of any one person to a maximum of 2,000 dūnums[78] of rain-fed land, or 1,000 dūnums of land irrigated by free flow or by artificial means,[79] leaving unscathed 250,451 petty and middling landowners, and striking–but against a specified compensation[80]–at only 2,803 shaikhs and other large proprietors[81] who, however, owned between them, as is evident from Table 5-1, more than 18 million dūnums, that is, more than 56 percent of the total of privately held

land. The reform was to be spread over five years, and the seized estates were to be distributed in lots of at least 30 and not more than 60 dūnums of irrigated land, or at least 60 and not more than 120 dūnums of rain-fed land, to actual cultivators, by first preference to tenants and farmers with the largest families and the least income.[82] Obviously, while cutting up the power of the lords of the soil, long the anchor of the monarchy, Qāsim hoped for a wide base of rural support in a greatly expanded class of landowning peasants. But, it should be pointed out in parenthesis, the actual process of redistributing the land would prove difficult, in view, among other things, of legal complexities, the absence of maps, and the shortage of surveyors, engineers, and agricultural and land specialists. By the end of September 1963, that is, more than seven months after the destruction of Qāsim, only 1,800,461 dūnums had been distributed to 35,104 peasant families, though an additional 2,802,366 dūnums had been seized and, with 4,237,498 dūnums of state-owned land, leased out by the Organization for the Temporary Management of the Agrarian Reform to 244,691 peasant families.[83]

In 1958, Qāsim did not limit the wealthy classes in any direction other than the land. Later he would lay higher taxes upon them: on June 3, 1959, if we may be permitted to anticipate, he would raise the maximum income tax rate, after allowing for the usual deductions, from 40 percent on incomes over 8,000 dīnārs to 60 percent on incomes over 20,000 dīnārs in the instance of individuals residing in Iraq–nonresidents being saddled with a heavier burden–and from 30 percent on incomes over 4,000 dīnārs to 45 percent on incomes over 15,000 dīnārs in the instance of limited liability companies, with milder charges for other juristic persons excepting the oil companies, which would continue to incur the same flat 50 percent as in the last years of the monarchy.[84] Qāsim would subject to the new tax scale the class living by the rent of agricultural land which, under the Hashemites, had until 1957–when it paid a mere 10 percent–scarcely been taxed at all. He would also impose, as of 1959 and for the first time in the history of Iraq, a death duty reaching as high as 25 percent on net estates valued at over 50,000 dīnārs, and an inheritance tax reaching to 12 percent on the net shares of individual inheritors exceeding 20,000 dīnārs.[85] In 1961, however, the inheritance tax would be repealed and the death duty remodeled in such a way as, among other things, to allow for a wider limit of exemption, free

30 percent of the value of industrial shares and properties, and reduce the liability of estates worth 90,000 dīnārs and less, while increasing to 30 percent that of estates worth more than 130,000 dīnārs.[86] It goes without saying that opportunities for tax evasion would remain as wide as they had ever been.

Save for these changes in the tax pattern, for concessions to wage earners, and for an insecurity intrinsic to the times and which was beyond his power to dissipate, Qāsim encouraged national capital all along. In fact, if we may anticipate again, to the end of the Qāsim period the classes living by profits would go on growing, except for the merchants, and the latter only in the tempestuous years 1958-1959. At the highest point of Communist influence–in mid-May 1959–Qāsim would take these classes under his wing.[87] In 1960 he would appeal to them: "Plunge forward and do not fear anything for we are with you."[88] The manufacturers, in particular, enjoying throughout special rights–income tax and customs tariff exemptions, protection against foreign goods, and liberal credit from the state Industrial Bank–at first under the Law for the Encouragement of Industrial Enterprises No. 72 of 1955[89] and Industrial Bank Law No. 87 of 1956,[90] and later under the Industrial Development Law No. 31 of 1961[91] and Industrial Bank Law No. 62 of 1961,[92] would never have it so good, as comes out in their conversations, and as is clear from the post-Qāsim official estimates of the contribution of the overwhelmingly private manufacturing sector to the net national product in the decade 1953-1963, shown in the accompanying Table 42-3. This should perhaps explain why the manufacturers, while not supporting Qāsim fully, never opposed him, even at the height of his alliance with the Communists.

If, by partial limitations and ample encouragement, Qāsim sought to secure the goodwill of the men of capital, he, at the same time, showed a passionate concern for the wide masses of the laboring poor.[93] This, he explained once, "is a filial obligation that I am discharging, I the son of my father and of the working class."[94] On another occasion he said to an assembly of workers: "I am one of you. You are my family and my tribe. . . . Whenever I look into your faces, a certain force strikes me and I am led to help the toilers everywhere."[95] In all this there was no affectation, nor was his motive one of expediency. In this connection his very last appeal to the people–the one he prepared on February 8, 1963, after the beginning of the

Ba‘thī coup and was never able to broadcast–is very revealing. “Sons of the people,” the appeal read, “I am ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim and stronger and more resolute for the sake of the poor”; and then again: “Don’t pay any attention to the traitors. . . . Crush them, especially for the sake of the poor!”[96]

Qāsim did not feed the poor with words. He acted in a tangible manner, at first in concert with ‘Āref and then on his own, to ease their lot. For one thing, he reduced the rents of rooms by 20 percent, of houses by 15 to 20 percent, and of shops by 10 to 15 percent,[97] but this was a measure that above all benefited the propertyless middle and lower middle classes. More significantly, he brought down the price of the flat loaf of bread from 6 to 4 fils,[98] and of the *ṣammūnah*–an oval 150-gram loaf–from 10 to 8 fils; and, commensurately, the price of flour supplied to bakeries, loading the difference upon the public treasury and keeping the prices at the same level even when, by virtue of the uncertainty of agrarian relationships, agriculture deteriorated.[99] Qāsim also limited night work to seven hours and day work, including that of seasonal laborers,[100] to eight hours;[101] obliged industrial establishments employing more than a hundred hands to build houses for their workers;[102] enforced provisions for social insurance against sickness and unemployment;[103] and in the first year of his regime allowed wage earners to combine freely and to federate in a general union.[104] If the peasants, who were now apportioned by law a share of 40-50 percent of the crop grown–minus the equivalent of the seeds if advanced by the landlord,[105] would nevertheless, with the decline in agricultural production, fare worse in the early years under Qāsim than formerly, the urban laborers, by contrast, would pull up sensibly: a pick-and-shovel workman, for example, earned a minimum of 380 fils a day in 1959, an increase of 52 percent over his minimum wage on the eve of the July 14 coup. But 1959 was the year of the “revolutionary tide” and part of the credit for the rise of the workers to their feet belongs more appropriately to the Iraqi Communist party. It remains to mention that in 1959-1960 Qāsim would build a whole town for the mud-hut dwellers of Baghdād–more than 10,000 houses with roads, markets, schools, medical dispensaries, and public baths. The town would carry the name of Ath-Thawrah–The Revolution.[106]

TABLE 42-3

Estimates of the National Income of Iraq for 1953-1963, and of the Contribution of the Most Important Sectors of the Economy in Constant 1956 Prices

Year	Net national product million dīnārs[b]	Contribution of the petroleum sector[a]		Contribution of the manufacturing sector		Contribution of the agricultural sector	
		million dīnārs[b]	%	million dīnārs[b]	%	million dīnārs[b]	%
1953	262.8	64.5	24.5	20.0	7.6	86.5	32.9
1954	322.6	75.0	23.2	22.7	7.0	114.8	35.6
1955	298.9	80.5	26.9	27.2	9.1	69.4	23.2
1956	334.7	76.0	22.7	32.0	9.5	89.2	26.6
1957	348.4	53.5	15.3	33.9	9.7	117.7	33.7
1958	363.1	88.0	24.2	36.5	10.1	90.4	24.8
1959	368.6	102.0	27.6	43.5	11.8	67.7	18.3
1960	412.6	118.0	28.5	53.1	12.8	77.5	18.7
1961	468.6	122.0	26.0	57.8	12.3	98.3	20.9
1962	503.1	123.0	24.4	62.8	12.5	115.1	22.9
1963	489.4	140.5	28.8	61.9	12.7	81.5	16.7

[a]Figures apparently include, among other things, Iraq's share of the oil profits and wages and salaries paid by the oil companies in Iraq.

[b]One Iraqi dīnār = £ 1.

Source: Minister of Finance (Shukrī Ṣāliḥ Zakī), *(Secret) Report on the Economic Policy in Iraq* (in Arabic) (1965, mimeographed), p. 2.

However, it is significant that when, in his addresses to the people, Qāsim identified himself with the laboring poor, he not infrequently threw in: "but I shall not maltreat the proprietors," or "I also protect the rich [or the employers]," or "workers and employers are brothers," or some such expression; or held up as an example his father's native village of aṣ-Ṣuwairah, where "rich and poor supported one another in good and bad days."[107]

In a word, upon the vital issue of interclass relationships Qāsim, as we set out to demonstrate, occupied a distinctively intermediate position. This no doubt helped him in consolidating his victory over ʻĀref and withstanding other challenges to his power. Conducive to the same effect and involved, of necessity, as a consequence–even if logic was not Qāsim's strength–was the essentially centrist course that he steered in politics, too. This, however, took longer to become apparent, averse to definiteness and to showing his hand as he was in the early period of the Republic. It is also possible that at the time he himself was not yet settled in his views, and that circumstances increasingly pushed him upon that path. At any rate, after February 9, 1959–that is, after he reconstituted his cabinet to fill the places left vacant by the withdrawal of the nationalist ministers–it grew less difficult to know

where he really stood. His centrism could already be inferred from the new physiognomy of his cabinet (consult Table 42-4). Of its eight civilian members, five belonged or had belonged to the intermediate, mildly "socialist" National Democratic party, and a sixth, Hāshim Jawād, the minister of foreign affairs, stood very close to them both in a social and ideological sense. More than that, Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd, the minister of education, had in his youth come under the influence of *Al-Ahālī group*, the real progenitor of the National Democrats.[108]

But more explicit evidence would be forthcoming as to Qāsim's centrist outlook. "The Rightists," he would say to a journalist on September 7, 1959, "will, as time goes by, proceed towards the center and so will the Leftists."[109] He could not have been more expressive of his political essence.

At first glance the phrase "I am above trends and inclinations," which in 1958 and 1959 was recurrently on his lips,[110] seems at variance with the point just made. What did he specifically mean by this phrase? "The one says," he himself explained on March 2, 1959, a week before the Mosul Revolt, "this is a nationalist, the other says this is a Communist, this is a Baʻthī, and this is a democrat. I say this is a patriot and a son of this country."[111] On another occasion–in May 1959–he was more elaborate. "I staged the revolution," he declared, "for the good of all the people; I am always with all the people; I am always above tendencies and currents; I have no affiliation with any particular side; I belong to the entire people; I care for the interest of all of them; I proceed forward with all; they are all my brethren."[112] But these are all characteristically centrist expressions, for only a centrist is capable of imagining himself above all conflicts.

In reality Qāsim, of course, did not stand above the struggles of parties, and especially of the two main forces–the nationalists and the Communists–nor did he attempt to mediate between them. On the contrary, he only prevailed by keeping them divided, by playing them off one against the other, and hedging them with their mutual aversions and antipathies. He could not act in any other way. For one thing, the National Democratic party, his natural point of support, did not have a wide enough political base. For another, and this is the decisive reason, he did not command a solid backing among army officers. He did all he could, it goes without

saying, to bring them to his side. On December 24, 1958 he raised their basic pay by 9 to 16 percent (see Table 42-5), although they already constituted the most privileged section of the salaried classes. In the course of the following four years, he would also make available to them more of the amenities and values of life than they had ever enjoyed. Among other things, he would construct or begin the construction, for them and their families, of 1,200 houses, with schools, markets, bakeries, cinemas, swimming pools, and health centers, and would allocate 7,464,819 dīnārs for the purpose.[113] But all to little avail. The only officers upon whom Qāsim could count were old *cronies* from his school or Palestine days, like Staff Brigadier Aḥmad Ṣāleḥ al-ʻAbdī, his chief of staff and military governor general, and Staff Brigadier Aḥmad Muḥammad Yaḥya, his minister of interior; or *kinsmen* like Brigadier Abd-uj-Jabbār Jawād, commander from 1960 of the newly created Fifth Division, and Colonel Fāīḍil ʻAbbās al-Mahdāwī, president of the Special Supreme Military Tribunal ("The People's Court"); or *apolitical professionals* like Staff Brigadier Khalīl Saʻīd ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān, commander of the Third Division; or *Iraqists* like Colonel Muḥsin ar-Rufai'ī and Staff Brigadier as-Sayyid Ḥamīd as-Sayyid Ḥusain, both members of the Shīʻī community, and in 1959 director of military intelligence and commander of the First Division, respectively. By the way, Qāsim was a relative of Major Muḥammad Alī Jawād, the chief of the air force in the time of the Iraqist Bakr Ṣidqī, and the victim of an assassination organized in 1937 by pan-Arab officers. In other words, Qāsim was linked by more than ideological ties with the Iraqist trend, which in the army, however, hardly compared in strength with the rival pan-Arab group. To the thinness of his support among army officers testified, first, his frequent shuffling of the commands of brigades and regiments; second, his reliance for personal intelligence almost entirely upon noncommissioned officers; and finally, his appointment, in 1959-1960, to the command of three out of the five army divisions of officers who were not graduates of the Staff College,[114] in direct contravention of Article 9 of Army Officers Service Law No. 89 of 1958.[115]

TABLE 42-4

Members of Qāsim's Second Cabinet (Appointed on 10 February 1959)

Name	*Post and party affiliation*	*Date and place of birth*	*Nation and sect*
Staff Brigadier ʿAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim	Premier and minister of defence	1914, Baghdād	Arab father, Failī Kurdish mother; Sunnī (mother Shīʿī)
Muḥammad Ḥadīd	Minister of finance; National Democratic party	1906, Mosul	Arab, Sunnī
Muṣṭafa ʿAlī	Minister of justice	1900, Baghdād	Kurd, Sunnī
Dr. Ibrahīm Kubbah	Minister of economy and agrarian reform; Marxist but not tied to Communist party	1919, Baghdād	Arab, Shīʿī
Hdaib al-Ḥajj Ḥmūd	Minister of agriculture; National Democratic party	1918, Dīwāniyyah	Arab, Shīʿī
Staff Brigadier Aḥmad Muḥammad Yaḥya	Minister of interior	1916, Mosul	Arab, Sunnī
Brigadier Dr. Muḥammad ʿAbd-ul-Malik ash-Shawwāf	Minister of health	1917, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
Hāshim Jawād	Minister of foreign affairs; close to National Democratic party	1911, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
Staff Brigadier Muhyī-d-Dīn ʿAbd-ul-Ḥamīd	Minister of education	1914, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
Ḥusain Jamīl	Minister of guidance; National Democratic party	1908, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
Staff Brigadier ʿAbd-ul-Wahhab Amīn	Minister of social affairs	1918, Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī
Ṭalʿat ash-Shaibānī	Minister of development; ex-member of National Democratic party	1917, Al-Huwaidir village, Diyālah prov.	Arab, Shīʿī
Ḥasan aṭ-Ṭālabānī	Minister of communications; ex-member of National Democratic party	1913, Baghdād	Kurd, Sunnī
Retired Brigadier Fūʾād ʿĀref	Minister of state	1912, Sulaimāniyyah	Kurd, Sunnī

Occupation before revolution	*Class origin and father's occupation*	*Subsequent history*
Commander, 19th Infantry Brigade	Working class; son of a carpenter-worker	Killed 9 February 1963.
General manager, Vegetable Oil Extraction Co.	Landed *chalabī*[a] class of high income; son of a merchant	Resigned 23 April 1960.
Judge	Working class; son of a carpenter-worker	Resigned 13 May 1961 for health reasons.
Ex-college professor	Landed *chalabī*[a] class of upper middle income; son of a merchant	Relieved of post 16 February 1960.
Landowner	Landed class of high income; son of a landowner	Resigned 5 January 1960.
Commander of a brigade in Jordan	Petty industrial class; son of a *rāwatchi*[b]	In cabinet till February 1963.
Army physician	Landed religious class of high income; son of a landowner and head of the Shar'ī (religious) Court of Cassation	In cabinet till February 1963.
Representative of Iraq at the U.N.	Professional middle class; son of a schoolteacher	Minister of foreign affairs till 9 February 1963.
Chief of staff, 4th Armored Division	Military middle class; son of an army brigadier	In cabinet in various capacities till 9 February 1963.
Lawyer; minister of justice, 1949	Professional middle class; son of a judge	Resigned 12 February 1959 after Qāsim's rescinding of his order suspending the Communist paper *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b.*
Commander 14th Infantry Brigade	Lower landed class; son of a landowner	Resigned on account of illness 20 October 1960.
Ex-college lecturer; secretary, Federation of Industries	Middling landed class; son of a middle landowner	In cabinet in various capacities till 9 February 1963.
Provincial governor	*Ṣūfī murshid*[c] class of upper middle income; son of a man of religion	Resigned 1961.
Commander, 9th Infantry Brigade at Ḥillah	Middling landed *sayyid*[d] class; son of a landed man of religion	Resigned September 1961 on account of Qāsim's Kurdish policy.

[a]Merchants of high status but not necessarily of high income.

[b]Maker of *rāwas:* water vessels made of skin.

[c]Leader of religious mystic path.

[d]Claimants of descent from the Prophet Muḥammad.

TABLE 42-5

Monthly Pay of Commissioned Officers (December 1958)

Class	Rank	Monthly basic pay in dīnārs in 1958 after the July Revolution	% increase over monthly basic pay on the eve of the July Revolution[a]
Generals	Field marshal	210	16.7
	General	180	12.5
	Lieutenant general	155	10.7
	Major general	135	12.5
Field Officers	Brigadier	115	15.0
	Colonel	95	11.8
	Lieutenant colonel	75	15.4
Aides	Major	60	9.1
	Captain	50	11.1
	First lieutenant	40	14.3
	Second lieutenant	30	11.1

[a]For basic pay on eve of Revolution, see Table 41.1.

Source: Article 7 of Army Officers' Service Law No. 89 of (24 December) 1958, *Al-Waqāi' al-'lrāqiyyah*, No. 104 of 1 January 1959.

From this crucial weakness flowed Qāsim's necessity of maneuvering between the nationalists and the Communists, counterpoising one against the other, and harassing and patronizing them by turn, as circumstances dictated. His very survival depended upon his not allowing any of the two forces to become too strong or both to reach an accord. For the better part of his period he did his seesawing artfully enough and with success, but at other times it looked more as if he were being buffeted by one wind and then the next. Indeed, at some points the pendulum seemed to sway too far to one side, as in the first half of 1959, when it swung sharply in a Communist direction. This needs now to be explained in detail.

The Communists, by virtue of their influence upon segments of the soldiers and noncommissioned officers and upon the broad mass of laborers and the poor, constituted the only organized force capable of offsetting the nationalist officers who, if divided on almost everything else, became more and more at one in their anxiety for Qāsim's ruin. This is, in essence, why the latter began giving in to the demands of the Communists. What these demands were they had made clear from the first. "Scoring a victory," they wrote to Qāsim on the evening of July 14, 1958,

> is much easier than maintaining and consolidating it. . . . There will always be those who, in the name of keeping the peace and warding off "anarchy," will seek so to sway us as to benumb our vigilance and determination. . . . We will do well to remember at this moment the government of Musaddeq which, in its eagerness not to provoke the enemy, withheld its confidence from the people and refrained from arming them, lulling them instead into tranquillity, with the result that it fell under the blows of a handful of ruffians and thieves.

Upon this and similar grounds, the Communists adjured Qāsim: "to grant the people the freedom to organize, publish and assemble and, beyond that, to release the political prisoners, encourage the formation of People's Committees for the Defense of the Republic and of a People's Resistance Force and arm this force without delay." The Communists also protested against the "crying disregard" by Baghdād Radio of "the Kurdish people . . . and of hundreds of telegrams of support" from their own followers during the first day of the Revolution and deemed it "highly important that the media of propaganda and broadcasting be delivered into national democratic hands."[116]

At the time, the Communists did not wait for Qāsim to accede to their demands but, riding on the wave of mass fervor kindled by the coup and benefiting from the indignation aroused by the landing of American marines in the Lebanon, proceeded to set up, on their own, "resistance" nuclei in various quarters of Baghdād. In an internal circular issued on July 15 for the guidance of these nuclei, they left little doubt of their ultimate intention to create an armed force alongside that of the state, and free from its control and entirely dependent upon their party. The more essential passages of the circular in question ran as follows:

> 7. . . . The central directives of the party are obligatory upon all the organs of the Resistance.
> 12. The Resistance must at the present concentrate on demanding, first, arms from the government . . . and, second, drill instructors from the army; these instructors must come under the control of the Resistance.
> . . .

> 13. The People’s Resistance . . . must shape itself up into a kind of popular power, exercising its responsibilities wisely and, as far as in it lies, careful in avoiding collision with the government and helpful to it in every patriotic step but this, as must be reemphasized, should in no way involve an impairment of the authority of its own leading bodies which is decisive as regards the units of the Resistance.[117]

However, on 20 July, Qāsim, pressed by the officers of the army and himself not unaware of the implications of the Communist initiative, ordered all the recruiting centers for the People’s Resistance to be shut down.[118] To leave the Communists under no misapprehension, the provisional constitution promulgated a week later vested in the state alone the right to create bodies of armed men.[119] The Central Committee of the party, meeting in an emergency session at the end of July, decided to yield to Qāsim.[120] But the latter had not really put aside the idea of a People’s Resistance. He simply thought along lines different from those of the Communists. What he had in mind was a force which, while serving his ends, would not grow into a threat to his power, in other words, a force which he could at will evoke, restrain, or lay to rest. It was with such an object and from fear of a shift in the power balance to the advantage of the nationalists that on the first of August he authorized the forming of a People’s Resistance, and attached it directly to the Ministry of Defence, that is, to himself personally.[121] He thus met one of the substantive demands of the Communists, but on his own terms. This did not annoy them in the least, for they knew that they alone–the Ba‘th had yet to learn the ropes–had the genuine capabilities for an undertaking of this kind. In response to an appeal by their Central Committee,[122] party members and sympathizers hurried to enroll in the Resistance, which by August 21 already counted 11,000 young men and women.[123] By way of caution, the weapons issued to the Resistance were, on Qāsim’s orders, to be returned after each training exercise or tour of duty to police stations, where they were to be kept under the strictest police control. “This,” commented later an internal Communist circular, “meant in effect keeping the arms for the defense of the Revolution under the control of the Counter-Revolution, for the police of the

dictatorship of Qāsim was the selfsame police of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd and of the dictatorship of 8 February 1963.”[124]

In the course of August, Qāsim granted one other demand of the Communists: he set at liberty all the Communist prisoners. This was a real boon for the party, particularly in the unusual circumstances it then faced. The July 14 Revolution had aroused to political life thousands of people from the classes working with their hands, and many of these had turned toward the Communists who, however, did not have enough trained cadre to cope with the expected flow into their ranks. The experience that the prisoners could provide was, therefore, very badly needed. But their liberation produced at first something of a party crisis. The Politbureau apparently showed no little reluctance to reincorporate them *en bloc* and preferred that some, at least, be placed under probation, partly for fear lest the existing distribution of influence within the party be palpably disturbed and, partly on the ground that many had been for years out of the active work of the party and could have lost some of the needed receptivity to its views, or might not be sufficiently close to the current mood of the people.[125]

This problem, and that of the continued flow of support for the party, were considered along with related organizational matters at the plenum of the Central Committee held in September 1958. The plenum, while apparently insisting on a probationary period for the bulk of the freed Communists, readmitted at once to full status many of the leading former prisoners, and elevated two of them, Bahā’-ud-Dīn Nūrī and Zakī Khairī, to the Politbureau, and seven others to the Central Committee, which it reconstituted as shown in Table 42-6–in a degree for their benefit, but essentially in order to keep pace with the new situation of the party. It also coopted to the committee three ex-exiles–‘Azīz Sharīf, ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl, and Muḥammad Ḥusain Abu-l-‘Īss. However, the helm of the party remained conclusively in the hands of Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī, its secretary; Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī, the secretary of the Kurdish Branch; and ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah, its foremost spokesman and, as already indicated, by far the most influential of its leaders.[126] At the time, it was persistently rumored that Khālid Bakdāsh personally approved the new list of Central Committee members, but this cannot, for lack of evidence, be confirmed.

In regard to the pressure emanating from “the widest section of the masses” for admission into the party, the plenum took up a middle attitude, condemning both the “leftist trend” which wanted to close the party to further would-be recruits, or at least to restrict the intake severely, and the “liberal trend,” which favored admitting any one who applied, regardless of fighting fiber or level of political consciousness. It acknowledged a shortage of cadre, but nonetheless called for an intensified enrollment of workers and peasants. It also created a Central Organizational Committee under ʻAzīz Muḥammad, a Kurd and ex-tin worker from Sulaimāniyyah, to bring the party nuclei qualitatively to the dimensions of the new tasks.

At the same time, the plenum defined its position vis-a-vis the two-months-old military regime. Characteristically, it warned against “ideas which regard the army as a mass separate from the class makeup of society and uninfluenced by its laws and which, therefore, exaggerate its role in the national movement.” The regime that issued from the July 14 Revolution, it affirmed,

> is a revolutionary national bourgeois regime. It does not represent all the national forces but [simply] the various strata of the petty, middle, and big bourgeoisie. From this springs the [present-day] contradiction. On the one hand, the forces that lead and take part in the national movement are those of the workers, peasants, and petty and national bourgeoisie; on the other hand, the forces that appropriated the reins of power after the Revolution are those of the small and national bourgeoisie. This contradiction is the main reason for the existence and deepening of the disaccord between the parties and groups inside the national movement. It is an error to regard this situation . . . as natural nor is it proper to surrender to it. . . . We can, by mobilizing the masses, weaken this contradiction and then remove it to a great extent.[127]

The party, in other words, upped its aims: it in effect conveyed, but in an internal publication and as yet only to its members, that it aspired to a share in the government. It would not signify this wish to Qāsim until two months later or, more precisely, until 5 November 1958.[128]

In the meantime, the party concentrated on strengthening itself politically. For this purpose it did not merely make use of the leverage it had over the laboring classes. By virtue of its adoption in October of the cry of "Sole Leader,"[129] it was able also to pull behind it a vast crowd of antiunionist Shī'īs, Kurds, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Persians, and so on, which it could not have attracted by purely orthodox appeals. Moreover, by focusing the hero worship of the masses on Qāsim, it touched a weak chord in him, and thus inclined him further toward the path which it favored and to which his own interests already urged him. Eager even to find a way to the propertied middle classes or, at least, to neutralize them, it came out in patently moderate colors: it demanded the encouragement of "national capital"[130] and, as noted elsewhere, censured 'Āref for his inopportune socialist slogans. It showed, indeed, at this time such a flexibility of attitude that when, after the arrest of 'Āref, the nationalists, finding themselves in an exposed position, called for the reconstitution of the Front of National Union, it did not retard in responding favorably, despite the bad blood between it and the Ba'th. Accordingly, on 16 November, 'Āmer 'Abdallah joined on its behalf with Kāmil ach-Chādirchī of the National Democrats, Fū'ād ar-Rikābī of the Ba'th, and Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah of the Independence party in signing a covenant in which all solemnly promised to discard any dispute that might lead to division among the people.[131] 'Āmer 'Abdallah proved "so accommodating and so different from other Communists," ar-Rikābī later remarked, "that one wondered whether he was at all committed to communism."[132] When, however, with the uncovering on December 8 of the Rashīd 'Alī plot, the front again collapsed, the Communist party gave proof that it could unite to its supple tactics a high degree of relentlessness. Turning to advantage Qāsim's fear of the nationalists, it pressed hard upon them, and pushed its way forward with characteristic tenacity of purpose. William Rountree, the American assistant secretary of state for the Near East, landing in Baghdād on December 15, felt briefly the intensity of its determination. The party's groups in the People's Resistance now came into their own and began to rule unhindered in the thoroughfares of Baghdād. Fā'iq as-Sāmarrā'ī, the ambassador of Iraq to the U.A.R. and a prominent nationalist, who arrived at this juncture from Cairo, had to stop and submit to search by detachments of this force nine times in ar-Rashīd Street, which is no more than three kilometers in

length.[133] But, while overzealous in its watchfulness and, when resisted, rough in the handling of its rivals, the party still exercised considerable self-restraint. This, however, soon changed. The unleashing on December 23 by President ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir of the campaign against the Syrian Communists, really an answer to Khālid Bakdāsh’s thirteen-point program of December 14,[134] raised the conflict between the party and the nationalists in Iraq to a fiercer level. The appearance of what one Communist-inclined newspaper described as “criminal gangs, using daggers, fists, and guns to spread chaos,”[135] and the stabbing to death of ‘Azīz Swādī, a Communist and a member of the People’s Resistance, and the wounding of others in an attack on the organization on the night of December 29[136] added fuel to the flame. Violent street encounters followed. Fearing its opponents’ fear of it, and impelled by the conviction that were it in their power they would act just the same and perhaps worse, the party did its best to render the ground intensely hot under their feet. By keeping its vastly superior masses in ferment and lashing their passions into fury, it maintained the nationalists out of balance, and in the end drove them completely off the streets.

TABLE 42-6

Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī’ s Third Central Committee (September 1958-November 1961)

Name	*Party function in 1959*	*Nation and sect*	*Date and place of birth*
Members of the secretariat[a]			
Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī	First secretary, with exclusive supervisory powers over military organization of party	(See Table 31-1)	
Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī[b,c]	Probably *mas'ūl*[d] of Finance Bureau and of correspondence with party zones and branches	(See Table 29-1)	
Hādī Hāshim al-A'ḍhamī	*Mas'ūl* of Workers' Bureau	(See Table 31-1)	
Muḥammad Husain Abū-l-'Īss[e,f]	*Mas'ūl* of Peasants' Bureau	Arab, Shī'ī	1917, Kāḍhimiyyah
Other members of Politbureau			
'Āmer 'Abdallah	Foremost spokesman of party and responsible, among other things, for *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*[h] and for relations with Qāsim and with Communist parties abroad	(See Table 31-1)	
Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī	*Mas'ūl* of Kurdish Branch of party	(See Table 37-1	
George Ḥanna Tallū	Temporarily incapacitated by reason of wounds received 10 February 1959; hospitalized in Moscow	(See Table 31-1)	
Zakī Khairī[c,i]	Member of editorial staff of *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*	(See Table 14-2)	
Other full members of Central Committee			
'Aṭshān Ḍayyūl al-Azairjāwī	Direct *mas'ūl* of military organization of party	(See Table 29-1)	
Nāṣir 'Abbūd	On leave of absence for study in Bulgaria	(See Table 29-1)	
Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-'Aballī	?	(See Table 31-1)	
'Azīz ash-Shaikh[c]	*Mas'ūl* of Central Party Zone	(See Table 37-1)	
'Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf[c]	*Mas'ūl* of party's Education Bureau and Economic Committee	(See Table 37-1)	
Sharīf ash-Shaikh	*Mas'ūl* of relations with national parties	(See Table 37-1)	
'Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd	Member, Kurdish Branch Committee	(See Table 31-1)	
Ḥamzah Salmān aj-Jubūrī[c]	*Mas'ūl* of Southern Party Zone	Arab, Shī'ī	1925, Baghdād

Profession	*Education*	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*	*Prior political activity*	*Subsequent history*
Lawyer	Law School	From a family of *sayyids*g of middling income; son of a small landowner and attendant in the holy places at Kaḍhimiyyah	1942 (25)	Active with Tūdeh prior to July Revolution	Removed from Central Committee, November 1961; killed 7 March 1963.
Lawyer	Law School	Peasant class; son of a peasant-boatman	1943 (18)	In prison 1949-58	Arrested 1961; in prison 1961-63; killed February 1963 by Ba'thī "National Guard" at al-Ma'mūn police station.

Name	*Party function in 1959*	*Nation and sect*	*Date and place of birth*
ʿAzīz Muḥammad[c,j]	*Mas'ūl* of Central Organizational Committee	Kurd, Sunnī	1933, Sulaimāniyyah
ʿAbd-us-Salām an-Nāṣirī[c,j]	*Mas'ūl* of Baghdād	(See Table 22-1)	
Candidate members of Central Committee			
ʿAzīz Sharīf[f]	*Mas'ūl* of Peace Partisans' movement	Arab, Sunnī	1904, ʿĀnah
ʿAzīz al-Ḥājj ʿAlī Ḥaidar[c]	Member of Editorial Staff of *Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʿb*; deputed in 1959 to Prague as representative of party on journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*	(See Table 23-1)	
Ṣāliḥ ar-Rāziqī[c]	*Mas'ūl* of Mid-Euphrates Party Zone	(See Table 37-1)	
ʿAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʿīl[f,j]	Ceremonial functions	(See Table 14-2)	

Profession	*Education*	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*	*Prior political activity*	*Subsequent history*
Worker in tin	Elementary	Working class; son of a worker	1948 (15)	In prison 1948-58	First secretary of party late 1963 to present.
Lawyer; ex-judge	Law School	From a family of *sayyids*[g] of middling income; son of a small landowner and religious preacher	1942 (38)	A founder of *Al-Ahālī*	Candidate member of Central Committee 1958-63; minister of justice 1970-71; minister of State 1971-76.

[a]The Secretariat was created by virtue of a decision of the Central Committee plenum of July 1959. Prior to 1959, ar-Raḍī was the only secretary.

[b]In Moscow for medical treatment January - April 1959.

[c]Released from prison, August 1958.

[d]*Mas‘ūl:* comrade-in-charge.

[e]Elected to the Central Committee at the Plenum of September 1958 and raised to the Secretariat at the Plenum of July 1959. Former expatriate.

[g]*Sayyid:* claimant of descent from Prophet.

[h]Central organ of Iraqi Communist party.

[i]Elected to the Central Committee at the Plenum of September 1958 and raised to the Politbureau at the Plenum of July 1959.

[j]Co-opted at the Central Committee Plenum of July 1959.

Sources: Undated statement made in April 1963 by ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh, candidate member of Politbureau in Iraqi Police File No. QS/26; supplement to verbal statement of Sharīf ash-Shaikh, member of the Central Committee, dated 27 March 1963 in File No. QS/26; conversation of writer with Sharīf ash-Shaikh in Baghdād Central Prison, 9 February 1964; and Police Files Nos. 3401, 4583, 3506, 3345, 2610, 479, 3078, 4877, 7909, 4242, 357, 3368, and QS/40, QS/59, QS/61, and QS/120.

TABLE 42-7

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī’s Third Central Committee

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	No.	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq
Moslems			
Shī'ī Arabs	7	31.8	44.9
Sunnī Arabs	9[a]	40.9	28.6
Kurds	5[b]	22.7	12.7
Turkomans	–	–	3.4
Persians	–	–	3.3
Jews	–	–	.3
Christians	1[c]	4.6	6.4
Sabeans	–	–	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	.1
Total	22	100.0	100.0

Education

	No.	%
Elementary	2	9.1
Secondary	7	31.8
College	13	59.1
Total	22	100.0

Class Origin

	No.	%
Working class	3	13.6
Peasant class	3	13.6
Lower middle class		
sayyid families	7	31.8
others	8	36.4
Impoverished upper *sayyid* class	1	4.6
Total	22	100.0

Sex

	No.
Male	22
Female	–
Total	22

Age Group in 1959

	No.	%
26 years	1	4.6
30-34 years	8	36.4
35-39 years	6	27.3
40-44 years	3	13.6
45-49 years	2	9.1
53 years	1	4.5
55 years	1	4.5
Total	22	100.0

Former Occupation

	No.	%
Students[d]	3	13.6
Members of professions	12[e]	54.5
White collar	3	13.6
Workers	2	9.1
Members of armed forces	1[f]	4.6
Trading petty bourgeoisie	1	4.6
Total	22	100.0

Length of Association Communist Movement in 1959

No. of years	No. of members
8	2
9	1
10	1
11	1
12	2
14	6
15	2
16	2
17	2
18	1
31	2
Total	22

[a]Including 1 of mixed Arab-Kurdish parentage and 1 of mixed Arab-Indian parentage.

[b]Including 1 Failiyyah Shī'ī Kurd.

[c]Arabized Chaldean.

[d]After leaving school: in prison or underground

[e]7 lawyers; 1 journalist; 3 schoolteachers; 1 college professor.

[f]Ex-army lieutenant.

The party now grew swiftly. Its opportunities to influence the people also increased to a marked degree. To this contributed a series of happenings

which took place in the last half of December 1958 and the first days of January 1959: the formation by the General Union of Iraqi Students, which had gone Communist in nationwide students elections, of auxiliary policing units; the appointment of Staff Major Salīm al-Fakhrī, a Communist, as director of broadcasting; the nomination of Kamāl ʻUmar Naḍhmī, the Communist representative on the Front of National Union in 1957-1958, as deputy prosecutor general in the "People's Court" and the turning of the court into a rostrum for the party; the chiming in of the independent Iraqi daily *Al-Bilād* and of other papers with *Ṣawt-il-Aḥrār* of Baghdād and *Al-Ayyām* of Najaf, which had from the first given voice to the Communist point of view; the emergence of the committees of the Peace Partisans, the Teachers, Engineers, and Lawyers' Associations, the Iraqi Democratic Youth Federation, and the League for the Defence of Women's Rights; the springing up, under the name of the Committees for the Defence of the Republic, of popular, Communist-inspired bodies for the purge and surveillance of the departments of the government; and, finally, the designation of Staff Colonel Ṭaha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad, who had been retired to the reserves in 1953 for his Communist sympathies, as head of Qāsim's new personal intelligence service.[137]

The party so overshadowed its rivals, and developed such self-confidence, that on January 14 Qāsim, feeling uncomfortable, suddenly drew in the reins. He thanked "the noble citizens belonging to the Popular Resistance, the General Union of Students, and the other patriotic bodies" for "the great and valuable efforts" which they had shown, but added that, in view of "some regrettable incidents" prejudicial to the public peace–the searching of army officers–at the hands of "certain elements" who were "trying to fish in troubled waters," the Resistance and the Student Union were not in the future to perform any policing duties without "a clear order from the supreme command of the armed forces or from the military governor general."[138]

By thus curbing the Communists, Qāsim hoped at the same time to propitiate the nationalist members of the cabinet and the nationalist officers of the army[139] who, while still at their desks or in formal command of troops, had–except for the Mosul commandant[140]–been shorn of any real function. He was either considering or was being urged to take further steps in their favor, for on 17 January the Communist leader ʻAzīz al-Ḥājj

roundly condemned in *Ṣawt-il-Aḥrār* what he described as attempts to "rehabilitate plotters under the pretense of bringing about an equilibrium between the nationalists and the Communists."[141]

It is not clear what caused Qāsim in the succeeding week to veer again toward the Communists. Probably reports began coming in that a new "conspiracy" was hatching against him: such an eventuality, as he knew well enough, could have best been countered or fended off by massive popular intervention, which only the Communists could secure for him. Be that as it may, on 25 January he granted the laborers the right to combine.[142] This, of course, meant placing one more lever in the hands of the party. On the same day, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, the official organ of the Central Committee, appeared openly for the first time, and proceeded to put forward the demand for the participation of all the national parties–the Independents, the Ba'th, the National Democrats, the Kurdish Democrats, and the Communists–in "the responsibility of power" shoulder-to-shoulder with "the national military figures" and under the leadership of "the true son of the people, 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim"[143]–a demand that Party Secretary Ḥusain ar-Raḍī ("Salām 'Ādil") would renew on 2 February in his speech before the Twenty-First Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.[144]

Next, on 5 February, came the announcement of the death sentence upon 'Āref, followed on the seventh by the resignation of the nationalist and conservative ministers. From this point on, the party did all it could to keep popular excitement alive: on 8 February there was a huge rally to press for the licensing of peasants' societies; on the fourteenth a mass march in commemoration of Fahd and the Communists hanged with him in 1949; from the sixteenth to the twenty-second a congress of the General Union of Students; and on the twentieth another big gathering to celebrate the legalization of trade unions.[145]

March opened with an aspect of something imminent. The political structure seemed insecure, self-contradictory, unnatural. At the top, all the government had well-nigh become centered in Qāsim, but a Qāsim beset by fears and surrounded by rumors and intrigues. At the root levels, in the streets, in the factories, in many of the government offices, and in some of the military camps, the real initiative belonged to the Communists. The people, for their part, seethed with opposite emotions. The swift-moving,

terribly serious events had sharpened the divisions between the various sects and ethnic groups. At the same time, the laborers and the poor, regardless of race or religion, feeling their strength, were voicing openly their desires and expectations, while property owners and conservative people looked with eyes of alarm at the unusual processes around them and, in their greater number, pinned their hopes upon the nationalists who, spurred by danger, had closed ranks and now secretly labored to encompass Qāsim’s ruin and turn the tide in their favor.

43

MUTUAL ANTAGONISM, MUTUAL DEFEAT

Before turning to one of the climactic points in the struggle between the nationalists and the Communists–the Days of March at Mosul–it is necessary to pause briefly and say a few words about some of the effects the struggle was already having abroad, and was ultimately to have in Iraq itself, on the fortunes of communism and pan-Arabism in a general way.

In view of its origins and the nature of the forces involved, the struggle could not but exceed the confines of Iraq. Indeed, in a short time it led to a political polarization all over the Arab East: everywhere, even in Jordan where the Communist leadership refused to take up an anti-Nāṣir stand, Communists and nationalists were thrown sharply into adversary roles. The struggle also precipitated a crisis in the relations between the U.A.R. and the Soviet Union.

The initiative in generalizing the conflict was not ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir’s, as is often imagined, but that of Khālid Bakdāsh, the Syrian Communist leader. Bakdāsh, who at heart had never made his peace with the Egypt-Syria merger, had all along been involved in happenings at Baghdād, but at a remove and obliquely. However, the progress of the communists in Iraq encouraged him to open up a frontal war upon the U.A.R. itself. This crystallized in the so-called thirteen-point program, which was first published on 14 December 1958[1] and which aimed, among other things, at restoring political and ideological freedoms in Syria, and in effect turning the U.A.R. into a loose federation.[2]

It was these demands, which at the time had some appeal in Syria, that provoked Nāṣir’s famous anti-Communist blast of December 23, 1958. By name Nasir denounced only the Syrian Communists–he accused them of “rejecting Arab nationalism and Arab unity”[3]–but his words had the effect of pitting Nāṣirites against Communists wherever Nāṣir carried weight.

Simultaneously, close to two hundred members of the cadre of Bakdaāh's party were arrested, and a furious storm that did not differentiate between Syrian and other Arab Communists broke out in the nationalist press and radio.

Not a word was said against the Russians. Depending heavily on their military and economic aid, Nāṣir had no interest in antagonizing them. But Bakdāsh, according to a former leading member of his party,[4] missed no opportunity to complain in Communist capitals about the treatment meted out to his followers and, playing upon existing differences in the Communist camp, pressed for a show of "international solidarity." The Russians may also have desired, for reasons of their own, an easing of the pressure on the Iraqi Communists. Besides, Khruschev would have been out of character had he let the storm pass in silence. At any rate, on 27 January 1959, at the Twenty-first Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Khruschev deemed it necessary "as a Communist" to state that "in the U.A.R. . . . the Communists are wrongly accused of assisting in the weakening and splitting of national efforts in the struggle against imperialism. . . . To the cause of this struggle there are no people more steadfast and more faithfull than the Communists. . . . It is no accident that the imperialists direct the spearhead of their attack against them." "Campaigning against the Communists . . . is a reactionary affiar," he added. This was as harshest as he went. He recognized that the Soviets and "certain leaders of the U.A.R." held "different views in the domain of ideology," but in the fight against imperialism and for peace their attitudes coincided. The differences, he insisted, should not be allowed to "hinder the development of friendly relations between our countries."[5]

At about the same time, Nāṣir was toning down his campaign. "The Syrian and other Arab Communists," he said on the twenty-seventh in Cairo, "are Arabs first, Communists after."[6] To Khruschev's mild reproach, Nāṣir himself made no answer. The riposte came on the twenty-ninth from his unofficial spokesman, Ḥasanein Haikal, who reminded Khruschev of a statement which he made back in 1957 at the Polish embassy in Moscow and in which he said: "We support Gamāl ʻAbd-un-Nāṣir, although we know he is not a Communist and, to boot, throws the Communists of his country in prison. This, however, is a domestic question which concerns him and his people. We support him because he is a patriotic leader." The

accusation formulated in Cairo, Haikal went on, did not concern communism as an idea. “Under other circumstances the idea produced undeniable results. The Soviet Union itself and People’s China are a proof of this.” But the idea “does not answer to the conditions prevalent in our country.” Nor did the accusation concern all the Communists. “Some Communists . . . Nikita Khruschev himself, for one . . . are considered heroes by our people.” “The members of the Communist party in our country,” Haikal added, “have adopted an orientation which we consider incompatible with the interests of our homeland. Is it permissible for us to keep quiet? Does anyone else have the right to speak? . . . Finally, we desire that Nikita Khruschev should know that *in our country the friends of the Soviet Union are greater than the number of the Communists;* that all our people love and respect the Soviet Union for *its attitude toward us;* and that they love it and respect it not because of the local Communists but *in spite of* them.”[7]

Pravda, answering back on 19 February, chose to regard Haikal as speaking only for himself “despite his use of the pronoun ‘we’”; referred to his “old connections with certain American circles”; took him to task for interfering–in an article in *Al-Ahrām*– in the affairs of Iraq “under the cover of words about Arab nationalism”; and disputed that it was up to him to say whether or not communism suited the Arab East. This was something “that will be shown by history,” it maintained.[8]

But the quarrel was of no advantage to either side, and was smoothed over in the last third of February in an exchange of letters between Nāṣir and Khruschev.[9]

However, the Mosul coup in March, its collapse in blood, Nāṣir’s undoubted connection with its authors, the general rout of the nationalists in Iraq, and the accompanying torrent of Communist invective against the U.A.R. reopened the quarrel, carrying it to a higher pitch. Nāṣir plunged into his bitterest denunciation of the Arab Communists, branding them as “agents of a foreign power,” and accusing the Iraqi Communists specifically of attempting to pry Syria loose from the U.A.R. and incorporate it in “a Communist Fertile Crescent.”[10]

This was too much for Khruschev. Addressing an Iraqi government delegation in Moscow on 16 March, after the signature of an economic and technical cooperation agreement under which the Soviet Union pledged to

loan Iraq 550,000,000 (old) rubles ($137,000,000), Khruschev asserted that, in attacking the Communists, Nāṣir was arming himself with “the language of the imperialists.” He also accused him of trying to thrust a premature union upon an unwilling Iraq. The USSR did not interfere in such things, he protested. “On the other hand, it is not a matter of indifference to us what situation arises in a region not far from our borders.” While affirming that Soviet relations with the U.A.R. “will remain the same as hitherto,” he did not conceal his preference for the “more advanced” system of the Iraqi Republic.[11]

In his counterreply on the same day, Nāṣir treated with disdain Khruschev’s charge that he had sought to force Iraq into the U.A.R. and declared the support of “a minority of Communists in our country” unacceptable and “a defiance to our people.”[12]

At the height of the dispute, Khruschev treaded on more delicate ground. In a press conference at the Kremlin on 19 March, he was said to have described Nāṣir as “rather hot-headed” and “rather a young man” who “took upon himself more than his stature permitted.”[13]

Eventually, as Qāsim began to turn his back on the Communists, the dispute was allowed to subside. Seizing upon a statement by Khruschev on May 20 to the effect that “the people of the U.A.R. have no more faithfull a friend than the Soviet Union,” and that “the Soviet Union definitely has no desire to interfere,” Ḥasanein Haikal rejoined: “We accept all of Khruschev’s words. We accept the friendship which he affirms and sincerely forget all that took place on March 16 and hope that relations will [now] be restored to normal.”[14]

This whole war of words between Moscow and Cairo was the least disquieting aspect of the conflict between the Communists and the pan-Arab movement. It had, of course, its consequences. It left the impression that the Soviet Union was opposed–at least at that crucial moment in the history of the Arab people–to the creation of a united Arab state “in a region not far from its borders.” It also swiftly dissipated much of the Arab goodwill that the Soviet Union had built for itself in the preceding few years.

But terribly more serious and more real was the struggle fought out in Iraq between the Communists and Arab nationalists. It is a central fact in contemporary Arab history, truly tragic and, in a high degree, decisive. It

left Iraq with indelible scars, and bitterly and more deeply divided than at any time in recent memory. It widened and exaggerated the differences between Iraq and the U.A.R., and by effectively isolating, in its results, the Iraqi people from the main pan-Arab current, checked the momentum of the trend toward unity, strengthened the forces of division in the U.A.R., and ultimately contributed to the secession of 1961. It also did irreparable damage to the Arab Communist parties outside Iraq–in most instances politically choking them and, in an operative sense, ending their role perhaps for good.[15] And if in Iraq the Communists were immediately triumphant, their triumph proved of short duration. Nor did the eventual turning of the tables on them give the nationalists conclusive victory, for faced with the hostility of the Communists–a considerable and enduring force–no nationalist rule can be secure. More than that, the conflict redounded to the clear advantage of interests they both opposed: it greatly eased the task of British imperial diplomacy which, fearing the implications of a unified Arab people for the oil interests, sought from the first months of the Revolution to drive a wedge between the new Iraq and the chief Arab power in the Near East.

Undoubtedly the conflict was a great misfortune to the two sides, and yet immanent in the historical situation and unavoidable. It flowed from the very inner course of development of communism and of pan-Arabism–in its Nāṣirite and Ba‘thī forms; from the intolerance of any competition, whether in the sphere of ideas or of power, which they all, in various degrees, shared, but which was essentially time-conditioned; and, finally, from the whole sequence of circumstances that brought the U.A.R. into being, and that dictated the Ba‘thī attempt to rush Iraq into a union for which Iraq was neither objectively nor psychologically prepared.

But we have been running ahead of our account, and must now go back and try to trace thread by thread, if we can, the history of the events that constitute a high point in this conflict and that unfolded at Mosul in March of 1959, for perhaps in no other events in our times did Iraqi society bare itself as much or disclose more of its secrets.

44

MOSUL, MARCH 1959

The events of March at Mosul illumined with a flaming glare the complexity of the conflicts that agitated Iraq and disclosed its various social forces in their essential nature and in the genuine line-up of their life interests. For four days and four nights Kurds and Yezīdis stood against Arabs; Assyrian and Aramean Christians against Arab Moslems; the Arab tribe of Albū Muṭaiwit against the Arab tribe of Shammar; the Kurdish tribe of al-Gargariyyah against Arab Albū Muṭaiwit;[1] the peasants of the Mosul country against their landlords; the soldiers of the Fifth Brigade against their officers; the periphery of the city of Mosul against its center; the plebeians of the Arab quarters of al-Makkāwī and Wādī Ḥajar against the aristocrats of the Arab quarter of ad-Dawwāsah; and within the quarter of Bāb al-Baid, the family of al-Rajabū against its traditional rivals, the Aghawāt.[2] It seemed as if all social cement dissolved and all political authority vanished. Individualism, breaking out, waxed into anarchy. The struggle between nationalists and Communists had released age-old antagonisms, investing them with an explosive force and carrying them to the point of civil war.

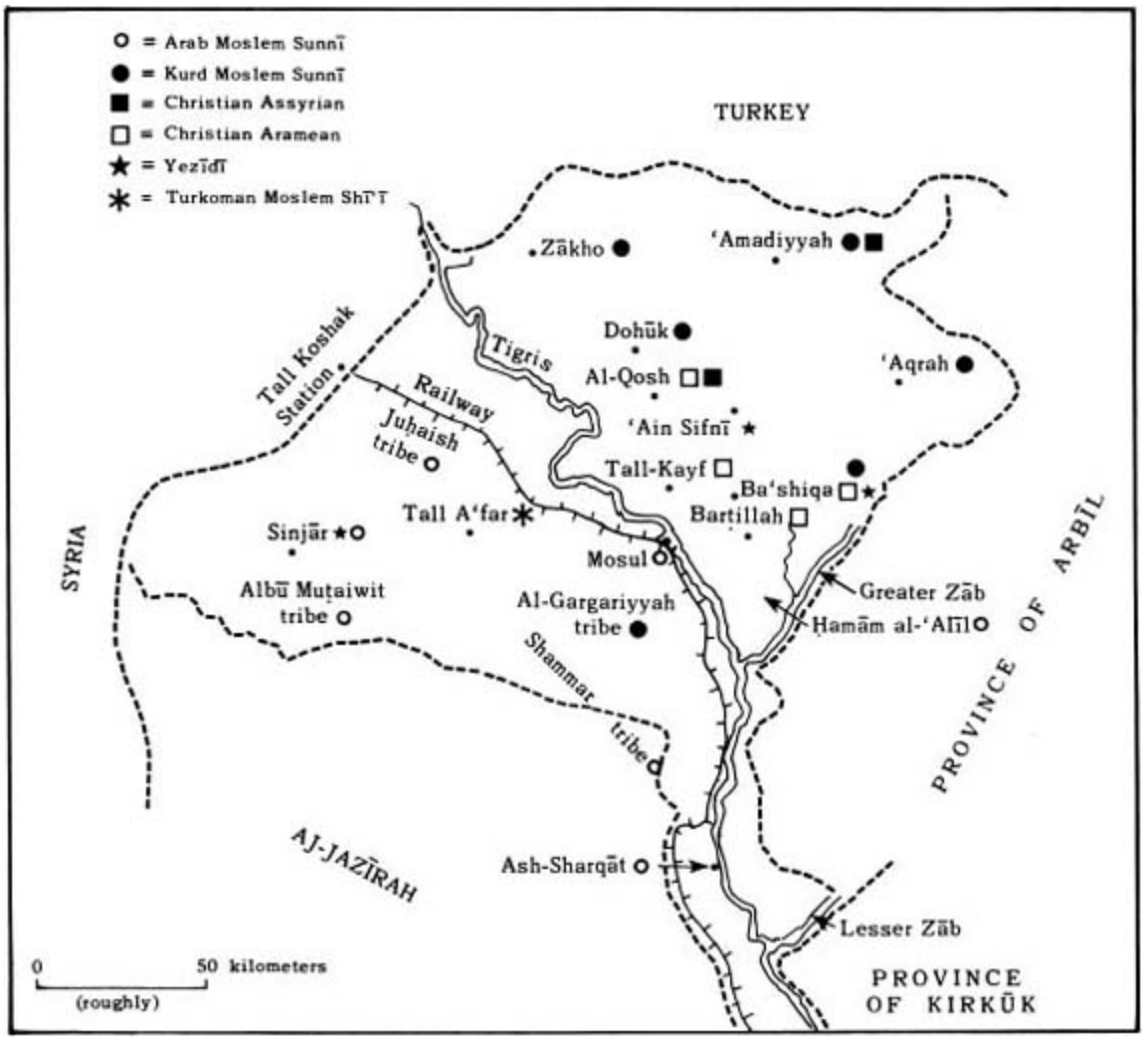
What added to the acuteness of the conflicts was the high degree of coincidence between the economic and ethnic or religious divisions. For example, many of the soldiers of the Fifth Brigade were not only from the poorer layers of the population, but were also Kurds, whereas the officers were preponderantly from the Arab middle or lower middle classes. Again, many of the peasants in the villages around Mosul were Christian Arameans, whereas the landlords were, for the most part, Moslem Arabs or Arabized Moslems.

Where the economic and ethnic or confessional divisions did not coincide, it was often not the racial or religious, but the class factor that

asserted itself. The Arab soldiers clung not to the Arab officers, but to the Kurdish soldiers. The landed chieftains of Kurdish al-Gargariyyah sided with the landed chieftains of Arab Shammar. The old and affluent commercial Christian families such as the Baitūns, Sarsams, and Rassams did not make common cause with the Christian peasants. When acting on their own initiative, the peasants, whatever their nation, poured their wrath upon the landlords indiscriminately and without regard even to political alignment: they killed among others, ʻAlī al-ʻUmarī, a Moslem Arab and an anti-Qāsimite; Qāsim Ḥadīd, a Moslem Arab and the uncle of Muḥammad Ḥadīd, Qāsim's most trusted minister; and Yūsuf Namrūd, a fence-sitter and a notorious Christian Aramean landed usurer. For their part, the poor and the laborers of the Arab Moslem quarters of al-Makkāwī, al-Mashāhadah, and aṭ-Ṭayyānah stood shoulder to shoulder with the Kurdish and Aramean peasants against the Arab Moslem landlords. In all three quarters, and especially in al-Makkāwī, the influence of the Communists was widespread: al-Makkāwī was the home of ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān al-Qaṣṣāb, a member of the Local Party Committee and the most authoritative Communist in Mosul. But there were Moslem Arabs from the poorer classes on the other side too: these were either attracted to the pan-Arab cause of ʻAbd-un-Nāṣir or of the left-inclined Baʻth–the effective leader of the Baʻth in Mosul, Fāḍil ash-Shagarah, was a humble construction worker–or were clients of traditionally dominant families such as al-Aghawāt in the quarter of Bāb al-Baid or of established bullies–*qabaḍayāt*–such as the Kashmūlas in the Manqūshah quarter and the Sinjārīs in Ra's aj-Jādah.[3]

MAP 5

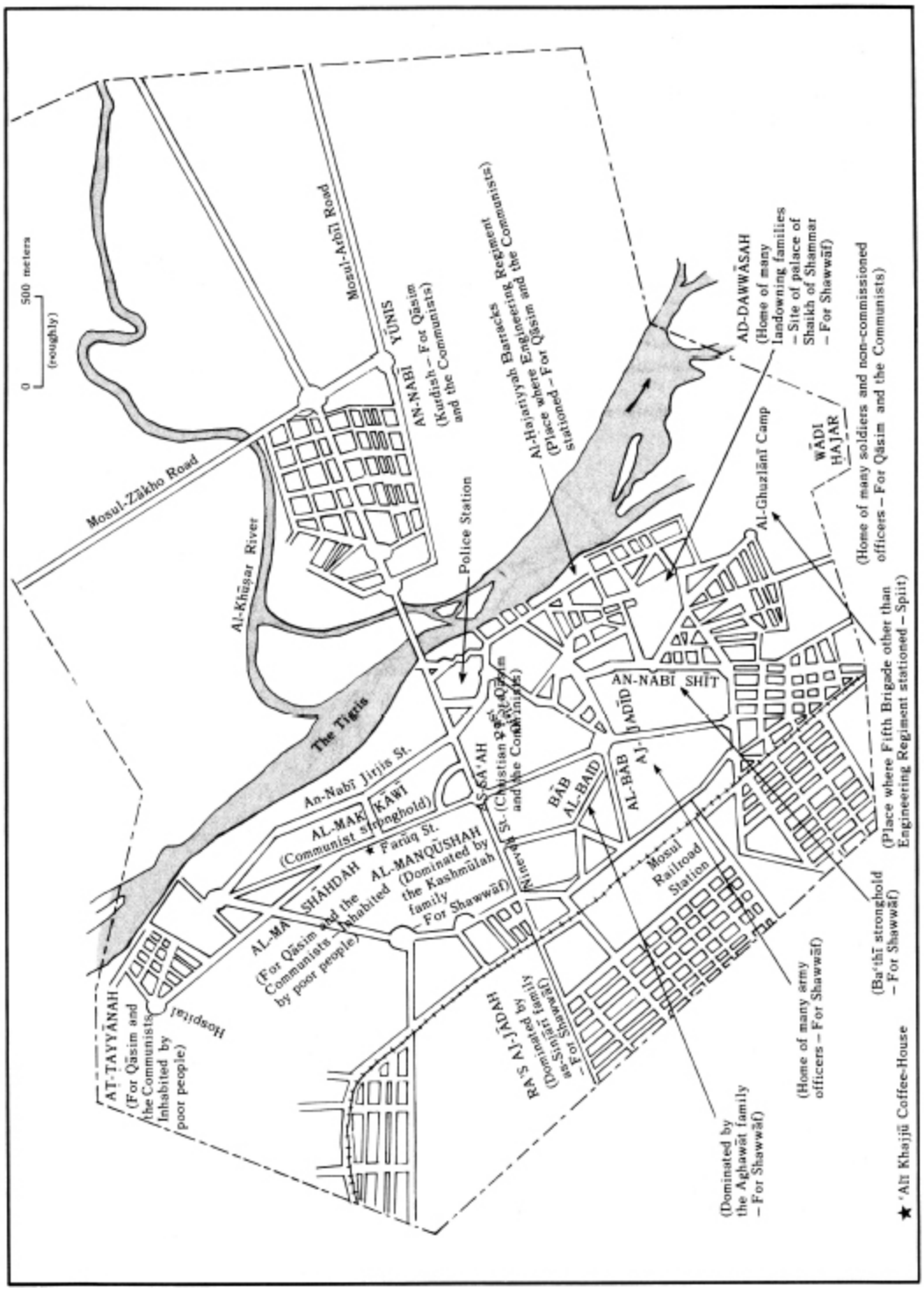
Sketch Showing the Prdominant Ethnic and Religious Character of the Main Localities of Mosul Province and of the Villages around Mosul City



MAP 6

Sketch Showing the Politically More Important Quarters of the City of Mosul and Their Line-up at the Time of the Mosul Revolt, 1959

Note: Except where otherwise indicated, the quarters were inhabited predominantly by Arab Moslems


0 500 meters
(roughly)
Mosul-Akrī Road
Mosul-Zākho Road
Al-Khāsar River
The Tigris
YŪNIS
AN-NABĪ
(Kurdish – For Qāsim and the Communists)
Police Station
Al-Hajariyyah Barracks
(Place where Engineering Regiment stationed – For Qāsim and the Communists)
AD-DAWWĀSAH
(Home of many landowning families – Site of palace of Shaikh of Shammar – For Shawwāf)
WĀDI HAJAR
(Home of many soldiers and non-commissioned officers – For Qāsim and the Communists)
Al-Ghuzlānī Camp
AN-NABĪ SHĪT
AL-BĀB AL-BAID
Mosul Railroad Station
(Place where Fifth Brigade other than Engineering Regiment stationed – Split)
(Ba'thī stronghold – For Shawwāf)
(Home of many army officers – For Shawwāf)
(Dominated by the Aghawāt family – For Shawwāf)
★ 'Alī Khajjū Coffee-House
An-Nabī Jirjis St.
AL-MAKĀWĪ
(Communist stronghold)
Farūq St.
SHĀHDAH
AL-MANQŪSHAH
(Dominated by the Kashmūlah family – For Shawwāf)
AL-MA
(For Qāsim and the Communists – Inhabited by poor people)
AT-TAYYĀNAH
(For Qāsim and the Communists – Inhabited by poor people)
Hospital
RA'S AJ-JĀDAH
(Dominated by Sinjārī family as-Sinjārī – For Shawwāf)

The tribal, ethnic, and class conflicts had been ripening for years. The ill feeling between the settled cultivating tribe of Albū Muṭaiwit and the originally warring mobile tribe of Shammar went back at the latest to 1946, when a dispute over land led to a bloody encounter in which 144 men from

both sides met their death.[4] The Assyrians, a foreign and unassimilable people, whom the English had employed as mercenary troops and whose very name still irritated Iraqis, had nursed a bitter hatred against Arab Mosul ever since 1933, when officers from this town played a prominent role in the crushing of a forlorn Assyrian rebellion. The Kurds, for their part, had long regarded Mosul as a thorn in their flesh–an Arab rampart projecting into territory which they considered their own. Moreover, they as yet remembered the murder by angry Mosul crowds in 1909–with eighteen of his retainers–of Shaikh Sa'īd of Barzinjah, father of the famed rebel Shaikh Maḥmūd and leader of Sulaimāniyyah's mystic Qādirī order.[5] The hostility of the peasants of the Mosul country toward their landlords was also deep seated, and had its source in genuine, long-standing grievances. "There are indications," wrote Mosul's British political officer in 1919,

> that the bulk of the land in the Division was originally in the hand of peasant proprietors, each man tilling his own land, but at the present day most of the land has passed into the hands of large proprietors, the *Aṣḥāb Ṭāpū*,[6] or as they are referred to locally, the *Āghawāt* or *Begāt* [gentlemen of high rank] who are generally inhabitants of Mosul. Complaints as to how this process was brought about are frequent. One hears stories of a peasant being offered 25% of its real value for his land and, on his refusal to sell, being cast into prison on a trumped up charge of a murder which had never been committed, to remain there for years unless he changed his mind and sold out. The introduction of *Ṭāpū*[7] seems to have given the city magnates opportunities to defraud the peasants of large quantities of land by means of spurious documents of sale etc. Mortgages were another favorite weapon. Be the causes what they may, the land has by now almost all passed into the hands of *Ṭāpū* owners, who are often absentee landlords who have never even seen the land they own.[8]

If at that time the peasants took things lying down, in 1959 they were in a different mood. The July Revolution and its aftermath had greatly speeded up their political consciousness. They had also been traversed by powerful Communist currents. Even the Albū Muṭaiwit cultivators had not remained

unaffected: Ṣāliḥ al-Muṭaiwtī, a man of relition from the Albū Muṭaiwit, became in 1958 a member of the Peace Partisans' movement, and succeeded in pulling the whole tribe behind him. But what above all let loose the long-simmering indignation was the attempt by the large proprietors to beat down the Agrarian Reform Law of September 30, 1958. To the peasants this was the real meaning of the Mosul Revolt, although the raising of the pan-Arab cry by the Ba'th did play a role in galvanizing the non-Arab elements among them against that ill-fated, many-colored venture.

That the revolt was to a considerable degree the work of the more active stratum of the propertied class is beyond dispute. Among its chief figures was Aḥmad 'Ajīl al-Yāwer, paramount shaikh of Shammar. The new agrarian law threatened the very core of his social position. Not only did he and his family stand to lose the bulk of the 346,747 dūnums[9] that they owned, but his hold over his 30,000 tribesmen was thereby also put in jeopardy. His cousins, the Farḥāns, who possessed 310,314 dunums, attached themselves to him. So did the Shallāls, also of Shammar; the Khudairs, shaikhs of the Juhaish tribe; and the Nāṣir Mirzas, chieftains of the Yezīdis–all landlords and holders of 62,363; 84,592; and 47,358 dūnums, respectively. The Kashmūlas, who owned 42,178 dūnums and dominated the Manqūshah quarter, and the Aghawat, who owned 39,509 dūnums and dominated the Bāb al-Baid quarter, struck in with them.[10] 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān as-Sayyid Maḥmūd and al-Ḥājj Ḥāshim, affluent merchants of Mosul, and Retired Brigadier Ḥusain al-'Umarī and attorney-at-law Sāmī Bāsh'ālim, both members of the well-known 'Umarī family, whom the July Revolution had despoiled of social eminence, also joined in the plot.

However, the real lever of the revolt was an army group, from a middle or lower middle-class background, led by Captain Maḥmūd 'Azīz, adjutant to the commander of the Fifth Brigade at Mosul; Lieutenant Colonel 'Azīz Aḥmad Shahāb, adjutant to the commander of the Second Division at Kirkūk; and Colonel Rif'at al-Ḥājj Sirrī, chief of the military intelligence[11] and, it will be remembered, founder of the Free Officers' movement. These men, it goes without saying, cared very little about the large proprietors' fear for their land or the probable forfeiture by the shaikhs of their tribal position. Indeed, some of their followers could not hide their uneasiness

about cooperating with the old classes. An explicit demand is even said to have been voiced for the exclusion from the affair of Sāmī Bāsh‘ālim and Retired Brigadier Ḥusain al-‘Umārī “because they are relatives of [the ex-Premier] Muṣṭafa al-‘Umārī and may have connections with the English or the Americans and could desire a turbulence in Iraq.”[12] What impelled the group to act against Qāsim differed from officer to officer. Some, like Colonel Sirrī, were undoubtedly sincere nationalists or had, like Captain Maḥmūd ‘Azīz, drawn close to the Ba‘th and been alienated by Qāsim’s particularist policies. Very probably motives of self-advancement were here simultaneously at work. There were, however, instances where pan-Arabism was a mere cloak beneath which hid the pettiest of passions. Some officers, like Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb ash-Shawwāf, commander of the Fifth Brigade–who, although one of the last to join in, would give his name to the undertaking–particularly resented the access to the highest posts of men who were only incidental to the July Revolution, such as Brigadier Aḥmad Muḥammad Yaḥya, Qāsim’s minister of interior. Others, like Captain ‘Abd-uj-Jawād Ḥamīd, who had captured the royal palace on July 14 and was now commander at Mosul of the Second Company Third Battalion Fifth Brigade, were ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref’s own men, officers of the famed Twentieth Brigade, whom Qāsim had dispersed and who never reconciled themselves to the fall of their leader. Still others, like Brigadier Nāḍhim aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī, commander of the Second Division at Kirkūk and the highest ranking officer that the plot could attract, dreaded above all the progress of the Communists. This was perhaps a sentiment that most of the disaffected officers shared, and which provided the common ground upon which they and the large proprietors met.

The nationalist and conservative parties were, of course, also in on the thing. Least effective were the Arab Nationalists, then still a diminutive group. Next in strength were the Independents, who formed an organic segment of the propertied class. Qāsim Muftī, their Mosul secretary, was from an old *sayyid* family and himself a landowner. But their capabilities were essentially financial. More important were the elements connected ideologically with the Moslem Brothers and reportedly financed by the wealthy merchant ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān as-Sayyid Maḥmūd. However, only the Ba‘th, which in that city counted about 150 full members and four times as many committed supporters, was able to bring into play genuine

organizational resources on the mass level and turn to advantage the fervent sympathy that wide sections of Mosulites had for ‘Abd-un-Nāṣir. The ties that the party had developed with the army officers gave added significance to its role. In the upper ranks of the Ba‘th could be found men who were linked with the landed class. Thus the father of ‘Adnān ‘Abd-un-Nāfi’, one of the local leaders of the party, held 4,041 dūnums.[13] The branch secretary himself, ‘Ādil al-Bakrī, a physician, descended from a well-known landowning family. But the real heart and soul of the branch, 29-year-old Fāḍil ash-Shagarah, was, as already noted, an authentic worker and extremely popular among the lowly classes of Bāb an-Nabī Shīt, his native quarter.[14]

The U.A.R., too, was closely tied to what was afoot. Naturally it had all along sympathized with the elements in Iraq that looked in its direction, but not being altogether sure of their efficacy and disinclined to cut all its bridges with Qāsim, it had in the past backed them in a circumspect and half-hearted manner; but, seeing that this only made things generally worse, and despairing wholly of Qāsim, it now undertook to give them unstinting support.

All these various forces began drawing toward one another around the beginning of 1959, but practical preparations for a revolt did not get under way until after the resignation of the nationalist and conservative ministers on February 7. At first the idea was for the Ba‘th party to eliminate Qāsim physically in the streets of Baghdād, and then for the officers to lay hold of the high points of the state.[15] Eventually, however, a different plan was adopted. The nuclei of disaffection in the garrison at Mosul, that is, in the Fifth Brigade, were to take the lead and, having gained full possession of the city, to broadcast a revolutionary manifesto, thus giving the signal for their associates in Baghdād to occupy, under Colonel Sirrī, the Ministry of Defence, arrest Qāsim, exile him or finish him off, and achieve the conquest of power. Simultaneously, other officers including Brigadier aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī, commander of the division at Kirkūk, were to declare their support for the insurrection. Whatever money the undertaking needed, the large proprietors offered to supply. Upon the parties, and especially the Ba‘th, fell the role of organizing the street. The paramount shaikh of Shammar undertook to transport arms and a radio transmitter from the Syrian region of the U.A.R., whose authorities had, in addition, promised, if necessary, to prop up the

basis of the rebellion with a battalion of commandos and a squadron of MIGs.[16]

It is not difficult to understand why the organizers of the rising pitched upon Mosul. Mosul was reputed as both a nationalist and conservative stronghold. It was also the home of between one-fourth and one-third of all the officers of the army. Beyond that, it lay close to the Syrian frontiers. No less conclusive was the fact that many of the officers of its garrison had already been won over to the rebellion.

Before the preparations had gone a long way, the Communists sensed that something was brewing, and on 23 February informed Qāsim.[17] At about the same time, Lieutenant Colonel Muḥammad Yaḥya Ṣāyegh, an Arab officer of the Fifth Brigade from a family of artisans, passed on particulars of the plot to Colonel Ṭaha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad, the pro-Communist head of Qāsim's personal intelligence service.[18] A confirmation came also from the Mosul branch of the National Democratic party. The disclosure accorded with the premier's fears, and inclined him more decisively toward the Left.

The Communists, Qāsim–and their partners, the National Democrats, who were only a small group in Mosul–did not together command enough stable support in the city proper to cope with the forces that the nationalists and conservatives were marshaling. The weight of numbers here was not in favor of the Communists, as in Baghdād and Baṣrah. The secretary of the National Democrats, Mosul Branch, placed the membership of the local organization of the Communist party in March 1959 at about two thousand.[19] But a knowledgeable person close to the Communists estimated that the figure was no more than four hundred. This appears to be borne out by the incomplete data shown in Table 44-1 and derived from the Security Directorate of the Ministry of Interior. Although only a tiny fraction of the 180,000 inhabitants of Mosul,[20] the party could nonetheless give in the crucial days of March a Communist direction to a People's Resistance force, which numbered on the twelfth of that month about seven thousand men.[21] This is easily accounted for. For one thing, the Communists enjoyed wide and active sympathy in the poorest districts, such as aṭ-Ṭayyānah and al-Mushāhadah. For another, the quarter of al-Makkāwī belonged almost completely to them: the ground had been broken for the Communists in al-Makkāwī as far back as 1941 by Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb, a pedagogue and a man

of letters, who grew up in the locality and whom Qāsim would shortly appoint as director general of guidance and broadcasting.[22] It was no chance occurrence that ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān al-Qaṣṣāb, the *de facto* leader of the party, and ‘Abbās Habbālah and Sa‘īd Sulaimān, two other members of the Local Committee (consult Table 44-2), should have been natives of al-Makkāwī. More significantly, because both al-Qaṣṣāb and Habbālah, and their fathers before them, and the father of Sulaimān, had been butchers, the bulk of the butchers of Mosul stood solidly behind the Communists. Many of the Kurds in the peripheries–and especially in an-Nabī Yūnis-and the Christians of as-Sā‘ah, al-Qal’ah, and al-Maydān districts, were also responsive to the party. The susceptibility of these elements finds a reflection, even if inadequately, in Table 44-2. Elsewhere in Mosul, the party could only count upon the small following in the quarter of Bāb al-Baid of Muḥammad ‘Abdallah Āl-Rajabū, a farmer, a traditional enemy of the powerful family of al-Aghawāt, an uncle of Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb, and the father of the Communist engineer Ḥāzim ‘Abdallah Āl-Rajabū.

TABLE 44-1

Known Membership and Composition of the Communist Party’s Mosul Organization at the Time of the Mosul Revolt

	No.	Remarks
Members of the Local Party Committee	12	For details see Table 44-2
Military Organization of the party		
Army officers	15	For details see Table 44-3
Soldiers and noncommissioned officers	not available	
Workers' Party Committee		
Members of committee	5[a]	
Worker-communists under committee	42	
Peasants' Party Committee		
Members of committee	4[a]	
Peasant-communists under committee	not available	
Party Committee for the Intelligentsia		
Members of committee	5	
Members under committee	not available	
Students' Party Committee		
Members of committee	12	
Student-communists under committee	not available	
Party Committee for Small Enterprises		
Members of committee	5[a]	
Members under committee	not available	
Markets' Party Committee		
Members of committee	5[a]	
Members under committee	not available	
Total known	105	

[a]Excluding secretary of committee, who was also a member of the Local Party Committee
Source: Security Division, Ministry of Interior, Iraq.

Outside the city of Mosul, the Communists had access to the nearby Aramean villages such as Barṭillah and Tall-Kayf, and to the Arab tribe of Albū Muṭaiwtī–in the latter case, as already intimated, thanks to their ideological power over the Peace Partisan and man of religion Ṣāliḥ al-Muṭaiwtī.

In the garrison itself they had on their side many of the noncommissioned officers of the Engineering Regiment: the Military Crafts' School, from which these men graduated, had been under their influence, if interruptedly, since the days of Fahd. They were also sure of fifteen commissioned officers (see Table 44-3), the highest placed being Colonel ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān Jilmirān, a cousin of Adnān Jilmirān, a member of the Local Committee and secretary of the Military Organization of the party (see Table 44-2). Excepting Lieutenant Colonel ʻAbdallah ash-Shāwī,

commander of the Engineering Regiment and a number of other military personages who were unequivocally committed to Qāsim, the remaining officers of the Fifth Brigade were either dubiously disposed or determinedly for the rebellion. On the other hand, Qāsim was extremely popular among the soldiery: he had not long before raised the monthly pay of conscripts from 400 fils to 4 dīnārs, and that of volunteers from 4 to 9 dīnārs.[23] He could not, however, know for sure how they would actually behave at the decisive point.

TABLE 44-2

Civilian Communists with Leading Roles in the Mosul Events of March 1959

Name	*Party position or role*	*Nation and religion*
Ḥamzah Salmān aj-Jubūrī	Member, Central Committee and Politbureau's special delegate to Mosul	Arab, Shī'ī
Mahdī Ḥamīd	Commander, People's Resistance Force, Mosul	Kurd, Sunnī
Hāshim Ḥusain	Secretary, Mosul Party Committee and secretary, Peasants' Party Committee	Arab, Sunnī
'Abd-ur-Raḥmān al-Qaṣṣāb	Member, Mosul Party Committee; *de facto* leader of party at Mosul and responsible for the party's relations with the government	Arab, Sunnī
'Umar Muḥammad Ilyās	Member, Mosul Party Committee	Arab, Sunnī
'Adnān Jilmirān	Member, Mosul Party Committee and secretary of party's Local Military Organization	Arabized Kurd, Sunnī
'Abbās Habbālah	Member, Mosul party Committee and secretary, Markets' Party Committee	Arab, Sunnī
Fakhrī Butrus	Member, Mosul Party Committee, head of Workers' Union, and secretary of Workers' Party Committee	Arab, Christian
Sa'īd Sulaimān	Member, Mosul Party Committee, and head of Teachers' Union	Arab, Sunnī
Yūsuf aṣ-Ṣāyegh	Member, Mosul Party Committee	Arab, Christian
Anton Yazīdiyyah	Member, Mosul Party Committee	Arab, Christian
Jamīl Yalda	Member, Mosul Party Committee	Arabized Aramean, Christian
Muḥsin Sa'īd	Member, Mosul Party Committee and secretary of Party Committee for the Intelligentsia	Arab, Sunnī
'Ādil Safar	Member, Mosul Party Committee	Arab, Christian
Khalīl 'Abdul-'Azīz	Head of Students' Union	Arabized Kurd, Sunnī
Gurgīz Murād	Head of Peasants' Union	Aramean, Christian

Date and place of birth	*Occupation*	*Class origin*
1925, Baghdād	Lawyer	Peasantry; son of a peasant-boatman.
1922, Sulaimāniyyah	Ex-lieutenant in the artillery	Petty bourgeoisie.
1925, Mosul	Unskilled worker	Working class; son of a worker.
1926, Mosul	Butcher; small sheep trader	Petty bourgeoisie; son of a butcher.
1917, Mosul	Ex-sergeant in the air force	Peasantry; son of a peasant.
1926, Mosul	No occupation	Bourgeoisie; son of a well-to-do merchant, ex-deputy, and one-time secretary, Mosul Chamber of Commerce.
1920, Mosul	Butcher	Petty bourgeoisie; son of a butcher.
1927, Baghdād	Mechanic	Petty bourgeoisie; son of a small trader.
? , Mosul	Secondary schoolteacher	Petty bourgeoisie; son of a butcher.
1921, Mosul	Secondary schoolteacher	Petty bourgeoisie; son of a goldsmith.
? , Mosul	Accountant	Petty bourgeoisie; son of a tradesman.
? , Mosul	Elementary school-teacher	Peasantry; son of a peasant.
? , Mosul	Lawyer	Middle bourgeoisie; son of a merchant.
1932, Mosul	Carpenter	Petty bourgeoisie; son of a carpenter.
? , Mosul	Student	Petty bourgeoisie; son of a *shaikhānah* (tea-shop) keeper.
? , ?	Peasant	Peasantry; son of a peasant.

Source: Police Files QS/26 and QS/87 and independent enquiries of writer.

TABLE 44-3

Communist Army Officers in the Mosul Garrison (the Fifth Brigade) at the Time of the Mosul Revolt

Name	*Rank*	*Unit*	*Nation*	*Religion*	*Place of birth*	*Father's occupation*
ʿAbd-ur-Rāḥman Jilmirān	Colonel	Communications	Arabized Kurd	Sunnī	Mosul	Merchant
Ibrahīm Qustū	Colonel	Guards	Arab	Christian	Mosul	Merchant
Nurī Saʿdallah	Lieutenant colonel	Hospital	Arab	Christian	Mosul	Tradesman
Jāsim Muḥammad	Major	Engineering	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	Seller of onions
Saʿdī Jamīl	Captain	Hospital	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	
Salīm Sallū	Captain	Engineering	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	Seller of vegetables
Salīm Dāūd	Captain	Engineering	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	Stone cutter
Muḥammad Jamīl	First lieutenant	3rd Battalion	Kurd	Sunnī	Zakho	
Ibrahīm Ḥusain al-Aswad	First lieutenant	?	Arabo-Kurd	Sunnī	Mosul	Seller of water-melons
Hāshim al-Abaichī	First lieutenant	Artillery	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	Maker of *ʿaba'as* (woolen cloaks)
ʿAbd-ul-Wahhāb ʿAbd-ur-Razzāq	First lieutenant	Torpedo boat detachment	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	
Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn Aḥmad	First lieutenant	Artillery	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	Construction worker
Ghāzī Jamīl	Second lieutenant	3rd Battalion	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	
Hāshim Qāsim	Second lieutenant	3rd Battalion	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	Confectioner
Adīb al-Khairū	Legal lieutenant	Court	Arab	Sunnī	Mosul	Small landowner

Sources: Independent enquiries of writer; and February 1963 statement of Communist Brigadier Ḥasan ʿAbbūd, commander of the Mosul Garrison after the suppression of the Revolt. Iraqi Police File No. QS/87 refers.

At any rate, it is clear that Qāsim and the Communists strongly felt that the correlation of forces within Mosul was not to their advantage, and rather than wait for their enemies to strike in their own good time, decided to anticipate them. From the first the Communists showed no hesitation as to the course best to be adopted. On 23 February, even as they were opening Qāsim's eyes to the plot, they announced that a Peace Partisans' rally would be held in that city on March 6.[24] As it soon became evident, this was to be no ordinary, routine affair: they aimed at nothing short of inundating Mosul with their supporters. By this means they apparently hoped to force the opposition to show its hand prematurely, or at least to smoke out some of its nuclei and smash them to pieces, while at the same time buttressing the position of the local Communists. Perhaps it ought to be mentioned that at this juncture or, more precisely on 24 February, Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī, the party's secretary general, left for Bulgaria and did not return to Baghdād until March 3.[25] Nothing is known about the real purpose of his trip, nor is it possible to determine whether it had anything to do with the events being described. In the meantime–on 27 February–Qāsim had given his consent to the holding of the peace rally[26] and, to assure its success, proceeded to bring every governmental lever into play: the radio, the television, the railways–he scheduled a special train to Mosul at half rate[27]–even the security

services.[28] The Communists had, in any case, been under standing instructions that "should the authorities waver or be dilatory, they were themselves to suppress any conspiracy against the Republic with all the force and means they could muster."[29] Now they took the fullest advantage of Qāsim's support, and developed such an agitation for the rally that the political atmosphere became extraordinarily tense. In the nationalist and conservative quarters of Mosul, people began warding themselves in as if against an invasion. A rumor that there was going to be "a massacre" flew in all directions. The fear of the propertied classes, in particular, was extreme.

All these things caused the opposition to move more hastily toward the coup. A message went out from Colonel Rif'at al-Ḥājj Sirrī in Baghdād calling for action on 4 or 5 March, that is, before the peace festival, but it never reached Mosul. Instead an advice to mark time was passed on by persons, loyal to Qāsim, who had wormed themselves into the movement.[30]

On the fifth, Communists, Peace Partisans, and other supporters of the government began pouring into Mosul from various parts of Iraq. They arrived by every sort of conveyance–by bus, car, train, on trucks, and in *'arabānas* (two-wheeled, horse-drawn vehicles). Many came on foot. An attempt to tear up the railway line near Ḥamām-il-'Alīl did not check the human flow. By 3:30 in the afternoon of the following day, as was officially claimed, some 250,000 people had massed in the city–most of them from the nearby villages and towns or from the neighboring northern provinces–and now marched through the streets chanting: "Our Sole Leader is 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim!" "There is no *Za'īm* [leader] other than Karīm!" Except for a minor incident in the quarter of Bāb al-Baid, everything went on peacefully. The nationalists and conservatives, not desiring to give battle under unfavorable conditions, stayed at home.[31]

By mid-morning of the seventh, the Peace Partisans had departed, but many Communists remained behind, including Ḥamzah Salmān aj-Jubūrī, a member of the Central Committee; Kāmil Qāzanchī, a leader of the Peace Partisans; and ex-artillery Lieutenant Mahdī Hamīd, who would soon organize and lead a local People's Resistance Force.[32]

The rest of the seventh was filled with demonstrations and counter-demonstrations, which progressively grew in intensity. Toward 2:00 in the afternoon, Ba'thists and their sympathizers from an-Nabī Shīt, led by Fāḍil

ash-Shagarah, flowed through Farūq Street and attacked and burned to the ground a number of leftist bookshops and ‘Alī al-Khajjū coffee-house–a rendezvous of the Communists. Later, around 4:00, near the Post Office, the Ba‘thists, now reinforced by clients of the Kashmūlah family, several of whom were armed, ran into the Communists who had come out to meet them from al-Makkāwī quarter under ‘Abbās Habbālah.[33] The tussle was attended by a discharge of firearms and casualties. The army interfered and a curfew was ordered.[34]

At dawn on March 8, after anxious enquiries by Colonel Sirrī, who had been wondering why his earlier summons to action had gone unheeded, the long-expected revolt may be said to have begun. Around sixty Communists were arrested, among them almost all of the members of the Local Committee, but not Mahdī Hamīd or Hamzah Salmān aj-Jubūrī. Although forewarned, the Communists had allowed themselves to be caught off guard.

The open call to revolt was not issued until 7:00 A.M. A manifesto, broadcast at that hour over Mosul Radio and heard only in the city, declared that Qāsim had “betrayed” the July 14 Revolution and his own brothers, the Free Officers; allowed the country to lapse into “chaos,” the economy to deteriorate, confidence to disappear, and money to “go into hiding”; “warred against Arab nationalism” and “let loose” the radio and the press against the U.A.R., “which had risked its existence for the triumph of our revolution”; and, driven by “an insane ambition” was leaning on “a category of people belonging to a certain political doctrine” which had no appeal for Iraqis. At the end, after associating with the rising Staff Brigadier Nāḍhim aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī, commander of the Second Division, and “all of the Free Officers,” the manifesto carried the name of Staff Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb ash-Shaẇwāf, commandant at Mosul, as “the leader of the Revolution.”[35]

Ash-Shaẇwāf, the son of a landed one-time head of the Shar’ī (Religious) Court of Cassation,[36] had been drawn into the movement only on March l.[37] His casting of himself now as its leader was not calculated to enhance its chances. In the army he had the reputation of being an unstable officer: up to a few months before the revolt he was known to harbor Communist sympathies.[38] Some of his civilian associates also do not seem to have had a great opinion of him. The big Mosul merchant ‘Abd-ur-

Raḥmān as-Sayyid Maḥmūd testified that whenever he broached a subject with him he would say: “I am rich, I have money, I am not chained to the government, I can now go and live in Switzerland!”[39] Much more serious was the fact that Colonel Sirrī and the other officers in Baghdād had understood that the right of leadership would belong to ash-Shaẇwāf’s immediate superior, Staff Brigadier aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī.[40]

In many of its other practical aspects, the revolt leaves the impression of a work not maturely considered, and done hurriedly and without care. The short-wave transmitter furnished by the U.A.R. arrived late and in bad working order, and did not go on the air until after 9:00. The manifesto was neither prepared nor approved by the officers in Baghdād: it was drafted on the eve of action by Retired Staff Major Maḥmūd ad-Durrah, who was, it would appear, wholly incidental to the revolt.[41] The bombing of the Baghdād Radio transmitters at Abī Ghraib was also decided at the last moment and on the run, and poorly executed.

Apart from an insignificant demonstration by the Ba‘th on the Karkh side of Baghdād and the rallying to ash-Shawwāf of the garrisons at ‘Āqrah and ‘Amadiyyah,[42] the revolt had no response outside Mosul. Colonel Sirrī and Brigadier aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī did not lift a finger. They did not act mainly because they could not act: Qāsim and the Communists kept too close a watch over them. In fact, at 5:00 in the evening aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī was compelled to express his support to Qāsim. The U.A.R. simply ignored its undertaking to provide commandos or Alī cover for the insurgents.

In the meantime, the heads of the Communist-sponsored unions and organizations–the General Union of Students, the Federation of Peasants’ Associations, the Peace Partisans, the League for the Defence of Women’s Rights, and so on–had appealed to “valiant citizens” everywhere to prepare to nip “treason” in the bud and “crush” all those who tried “to play havoc” with the existence of the Republic or to oppose the “good son of the people, ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim.” They also called upon “the faithful leader” to mobilize and arm the masses.[43]

Having no other recourse–doubtful, as he was, of the loyalty of most of the officer corps–he partially responded to their appeal. He gave the People’s Resistance Forces a free hand, but continued to withhold ammunition from them. At the same time he afforded the Communists and their tens of thousands of supporters the run of the streets in Baghdad and

other towns. This completed the paralysis of the nationalists and conservatives.

Only in Mosul did the rebels gain mastery of the situation, and not before subduing and disarming the recalcitrant Engineering Regiment and imprisoning its commander, Lieutenant Colonel ʻAbdallah ash-Shāwī, and three of its commissioned and twenty-one of its noncommissioned officers. Even then, by nightfall of March 8, they could already sense the doom that was infallibly moving upon them.

Toward 8:00 in the morning of the next day, four planes of the Iraqi Air force–which since July 14 had been under the command of Communist Air Staff Colonel Jalāl al-Awūatī–bombed the headquarters of the Fifth Brigade. Slightly wounded, ash-Shawwāf rushed to the hospital but, according to the Communists, was spotted by soldiers from the Engineering Regiment, one of whom, Muḥammad Yūsuf, stabbed him with his dagger, throwing him to the ground, and then, snatching his machine-gun, fired repeatedly at him, quenching his life. In the nationalist version, however, he was killed at a dressing-post by a Kurdish medical attendant; and in still another version, by four soldiers acting upon orders from Flight Major Aḥmad Habīb. At about the same time, elements from the Engineering Regiment, arming themselves with canes and iron bars, marched on the military prison in al-Ḥajariyyah barracks and, breaking it open, released their officers and all the Communist detainees, but could not save their commander, ʻAbdallah ash-Shāwī, who was cut down by Captain Maḥmūd ʻAzīz, Shawwāf's adjutant. Peace Partisan leader Kāmil Qāzanchī was also found dead. In al-Ghuzlānī camp many of the artillerists and infantrymen who, holding to discipline, had sullenly gone along with the revolt, now abruptly changed sides, openly declaring for Qāsim. Bloody clashes followed. Yezīdī and Barzānī Kurdish tribesmen and Aramean peasants from Tall-Kayf, swarming into Mosul from the countryside in answer to appeals from Baghdād, threw themselves into the fray. Elements of the Third Battalion, led by Communist Second Lieutenants Ghāzī Jamīl and Hāshim Qāsim rushed the arsenal and, seizing the arms, distributed them to the Communists and the men of the people.[44]

When last heard at 12:37 in the afternoon, the rebel radio was threatening to "tear apart" all those who abetted "the traitor Qāsim."[45] Feelings became very inflamed and the clashes more and more bitter, attaining in a short time

the full fury of civil war. The social hatreds, fermenting for years, had been let loose.

The sequel was recounted in the following manner to Ba‘thī investigators in 1963 by Mahdī Ḥamīd, a Kurdish ex-artillery lieutenant from Sulaimāniyyah, a supporter in 1945 of Mulla Muṣṭafa al-Bārzānī, a member of the Communist party since 1948, an inmate of royalist prisons from 1949 to 1958, and soon the commander of the People’s Resistance Force at Mosul:

> Fighting in the streets grew keener from hour to hour. The people were seized with panic and there was much loss in life and property, as unavoidably happens in such circumstances, authority and discipline having fallen away. At this critical moment it occurred to me[46] to put on a military uniform and bear the rank of First Lieutenant especially as I had, after my release from prison, made petition to be reaccepted into the army. . . . As‘ad al-Bāmirnī, a friend and the owner of Baghdād Hotel, . . . procured me [an officer’s suit] and, with great difficulty, the requisite rank. Taking from him a small pistol, I made my way into the police station and entering upon its Superintendent, Yasīn Darwīsh, announced to him that I was an officer from the Ministry of Defence and had been entrusted to cooperate with him. He gave me welcome, expressed readiness to assist me to the full, and provided me with policemen and the needed ammunition. Ṣāḥib al-Quraishī, the Director of Security, also proved helpful, placing at my disposal his own office and another room.
>
> In the meantime men of the people, tribesmen by the thousands, soldiers that had abandoned their units, and others . . . had been swarming into the police station. . . .
>
> What I had to do, first and foremost, was to gain a hold upon things, organize the popular resistance, contain the firing, and minimize the losses in life and possessions. . . .
>
> During my presence at the police center, extremely deplorable incidents occurred in the city. There were assaults on the lives of people through private hatred or from a desire for vengeance or by reason of family feuds or on the ground that they carried arms against the government or had aided the rebellion. These illegal acts were

perpetrated by ill-willed, politically unattached elements or by sections of the soldiery that had broken discipline.

Thus when a person was arrested at his house and accused of bearing arms, he was either killed out of hand or if, as seldom happened, he did reach the police station in safety, he was liable to be shot if a single voice called out: “A conspirator!” When one of the officers–his name, I think, was Ḥāzim al-Ḥamaṭanī–entered into the police station with a Sterling machine gun in his hand, a soldier cried out: “A plotter!” or “A follower of ash-Shawwāf!” whereupon a sergeant, one Faiṣal, fired at him, killing him instantly. I tried to take stern measures against this sergeant but, as I was not from Mosul and a stranger to them, the soldiers and men of the people turned upon me. The sergeant himself remained adamant, reiterating that that was the fate of traitors! He was very excited and could have at that moment done to death any one who stood in his way. . . . Again the mere mention of the name of the Kashmūlas . . . who had been putting up an armed resistance . . . was sufficient to cause a crowd of soldiers and armed men to fire upon some members of this family on their arrival at the police station. The latter were severely wounded and died on their way to the hospital. I was out making contact with the military post when this incident occurred. In another instance, the soldiers and a part of the populace tried to assail some ten officers who had been brought from Tall A‘far and had intended to escape to Syria but, interfering, I threatened to kill any one who would lay hands upon them and indeed saved their lives, but during the night the car in which they were being carried to al-Ḥajariyyah barracks was fired at when its driver failed to respond to a challenge from the commander of the Guard. Captain ‘Abd-uj-Jawād [Ḥamīd] was killed. I hope that with a view to truth . . . there will be an enquiry about this incident by reason of its relevance and the strong light it throws upon the other events.[47]

The summary vengeance to which the soldiers and armed multitude resorted in their moments of wild anger was, in large part, a paying-back for the terrible bleeding that they had suffered. They had come at several points under fire from houses where nationalists and landowners had fortified themselves. In the palace of the shaikh of Shammar, machine guns had been

set up and could not be silenced until Communist soldiers had brought up tanks and fired several shells at the palace.

Violence was to reign for three more days, and there was no length to which it did not go. “Conspirators” were strung up on lampposts or their bodies dragged about in the streets. “As soon as it came to the knowledge of the [crowds] that so-and-so was wealthy . . . there was a beating of drums on the next morning before his house which was then searched or pillaged.”[48] The police remained utterly helpless. The army officers, even those who had had no sympathy for the revolt, kept within doors, as the idea spread in the ranks that all officers were “traitors.”[49] When Brigadier Ḥasan ‘Abbūd Ibrahīm, a Communist and the new commandant of the garrison, arrived in the evening of 10 March, he found

> the confusion at its height and the army killing and plundering with the help of people from the outskirts of the city. . . . Our soldiers and noncommissioned officers . . . were saying that the officers were conspirators and would not submit to any direction. . . .
>
> In addition to the chaos in the city, there was a shedding of blood all over the province. In [Kurdish] Dohuk, District Governor ‘Abdallah aj-Jubūrī was cut down. At [Shi‘ī Turkoman] Tall A‘far many Shammar tribesmen perished. In [Christian Aramean] Tall Kayf [the landed lawyers] Ḥāzim al-Muftī and Salem ash-Sha‘ār came to a violent death. Many clashes occurred also between the tribe of al-Gargariyyah and that of Albū Muṭaiwit. . . .[50]

In Mosul itself it was not until the arrival on March 12 of two battalions of the First Brigade that the new commandant was able, “by favors, rewards, and grants of leave,” to withdraw the defiant units into their barracks.[51] The departure on the same day of the Yezīdī and Kurdish tribesmen helped to restore peace to the city.[52]

Not all the violence had been spontaneous and unguided. By nightfall of March 9, several of the districts of Mosul were in the power of the Communists, and many of the soldiers of the Engineering Regiment and the Third Infantry Battalion were taking orders directly from them, even though their authority remained incomplete and unstable. A rounding up of their armed enemies began at once all over the city. The police station became in

effect their headquarters, and at the same time a “people’s court.” Theirs was clearly the responsibility for the summary trial and execution on the tenth of Aḥmad Sūrī, a bookstore keeper, and Ṣāliḥ Ḥantūsh, head of the Taxi Drivers’ Union, both members of the Ba‘th party.[53] They, and especially Mahdī Ḥamīd, the commander of the People’s Resistance Force, were also beyond doubt answerable for the conviction and shooting on the fourteenth at Damlamājah, five or so kilometers to the east of Mosul, of seventeen other persons,[54] including one Shammar shaikh, one Nasserite, three Ba‘thīs, and seven *qabadayāt*–bullies–several of whom were members of the Kashmūlah family. This incident, it will be noted, took place after all tumult had ceased.

Later in 1963, Mahdī Ḥamīd would claim that at the time Qāsim issued orders “to annihilate any one who offered resistance or carried arms against the government,” and that this encouraged “impetuosities” and “revengeful acts,” and that, furthermore, at one point Qāsim indicated through the commandant of the garrison that “there is no need to send such a large number of detainees to Baghdād. What shall we do with them here? Get rid of them there at Mosul.” Mahdī Ḥamīd would also maintain that

> the power to arrest and investigate was granted to us [i.e., to the People’s Resistance] formally and in an official letter from the commandant, who was not, however, called as a witness at our trial [in 1960], even though we had requested that he give evidence. . . . Indeed, all the blame was cast upon us. . . . But the primary responsibility lay with Qāsim . . . and the Mosul commandant. . . . Otherwise why didn’t they hinder us . . . which they could have done . . . especially after the arrival of the First Brigade.[55]

Communists would, in addition, point out that, shortly after the Mosul events, Qāsim invited Mahdī Ḥamīd and Mosul’s Communist leaders to Baghdād, commended them for their loyalty, presented them with revolvers, and made a gift of 1,500 dīnārs to the Communist party and that, furthermore, he reaccepted Mahdī Ḥamīd into the army and, promoting him to the rank of captain, placed him in command of the People’s Resistance Forces in the entire northern part of the country.[56]

On the other hand, it can be inferred from a deposition by the commandant of the garrison that the shooting at Damlamājah was carried out in secrecy and without his knowledge.[57] More than that, at a press conference held in 1960, Qāsim, referring to the Mosul incidents, took the pain to stress that "in the First Manifesto of the Revolution . . . we did not say: 'Take the law into your hands.'"[58]

All the same, Iraqis still recall how, at one point during the trial of Mahdī Ḥamīd and his colleagues before the First Martial Court in 1960, the public hearings were stopped in a sudden manner and for an undisclosed reason. The general impression at the time was that the trial was yielding evidence that would have implicated Qāsim himself. It is significant that although the court condemned the accused to death by hanging, they were subsequently set at liberty.

Today nationalists, in particular, insist that Qāsim had a longstanding grudge against Mosul: in 1937 a relative of his, Major Muḥammad ʻAlī Jawād, the then chief of the Iraqi air force, was killed in this city. The nationalists also maintain that Qāsim was well aware that the non-Arab country people bitterly hated the Arab inhabitants of Mosul, and yet appealed to them to suppress the revolt.

In regard to the summary executions on March 10, an accusing finger has likewise been pointed at the Kurds: a Communist eyewitness affirmed in 1963 that Mulla Anwar editor of *Khabāt* and member of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, and a number of Barzānis, led by one of the sons of Mulla Muṣṭafa, probably Luqmān, formed part of the *ad hoc* firing squad.[59]

No matter how one apportions the responsibility, one cannot help feeling, as one goes over the record, that at the root of much of the aggressiveness in the days of March at Mosul was a common fear to which all the sides to the conflict seem to have succumbed: the fear that failure at that crucial historical point might well entail destruction at the hands of their adversaries.

Estimates of the number of victims varied widely at the time, and ran as high as 5,000, but it is now generally agreed that they were in the hundreds rather than in the thousands. The Communists count about 110 killed and 300 wounded at Mosul proper, 30 of the former and 20 of the latter followers of ash-Shawwāf, and the rest soldiers and "men of the people."[60] The nationalists have been able to count up at least 48 killed in their own

ranks and in the ranks of their allies.[61] They also place the total number of dead at around 200.[62] So does Muḥammad Hadīd, Qāsim's minister of finance and a trustworthy witness.[63]

45

THE FLOW

Already before the rebellion at Mosul, the Communists had been calling for drastic steps against “traitors,” “plotters,” and “suspicious elements,” and for a “merciless” cleansing of the army and the state machine and a “tightening of the screws to the last thread.”[1] They had also been insisting on the need to place arms within the reach of the People’s Resistance and to pull Iraq out of the Baghdād Pact without delay. Now they pushed these demands with greater vigor in an uninterrupted series of mammoth marches, rallies, and demonstrations, arousing the intensest excitement. They did not assert themselves only in the streets. As a later internal party document put it, not without some overcoloring: “We so fastened the rings of our influence around Qāsim . . . that every word from us and every political memorandum we privately presented to him became at once official policy.”[2] In their favor worked the flurry of alarm that the rebellion had produced in Qāsim. The fierce verbal war that the U.A.R. opened up on him on 11 March 1959 also played into their hands.

The long overdue formal withdrawal from the Baghdād Pact came on the twenty-fourth of that month. But more important was the purge that now got under way on a scale hitherto unknown in Iraq. It affected, on a conservative estimate,[3] no fewer than two thousand people. In many departments of the government, and especially in the Ministries of Education, Guidance, Economics, Development, Health, and Communications and Public Works, Communist-led Committees for the Defence of the Republic, made up by and large of attendants, laborers, and the humbler officials, came to the fore, keeping guard, giving orders, dismissing undesired functionaries or herding them into prison. An analogous process set in in the army. Nationalist commanders of units and branches at every level and many nationalist junior officers were placed on

the retired list or committed to the overflowing Second Tank Regiment's Detention Camp, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Fāḍil al-Bayātī, a Communist, and eventually brought before an implacable investigating committee, presided over by Staff Colonel Hāshim ʻAbd-uj-Jabbār, also a Communist.[4] The purge attained such an intensity that it pretty much paralyzed the will of the wide non-Communist segment of the officer corps, rendering it, at least for the time being, incapable of effective action. In the same sense worked the weakening in the ranks of the old habit of obedience that the course of the Mosul rebellion had revealed.

Simultaneously, the Communists were making rapid conquests in the armed forces. They might not have been after power, but they surely sought to hold the ultimate key to it. By late April they had in their hands or in the hands of officers close to their party the commands of the Second Division at Kirkūk, the Fifth Brigade of the Second Division at Mosul, the Twentieth Brigade of the Third Division (ʻĀref's brigade) at Jalawlā', the First Brigade of the First Division at Musayyib, the Sixth Armored Brigade and the Second, Third, and al-Muthannah Tank Regiments of the Fourth Division at Abū Ghraib, and the Third Battalion of the Twenty-seventh Brigade of the Third Division at al-Washshāsh camp (see Table 45-1). These were gains which, under the pressure of circumstances–the danger threatening from the side of the nationalists–Qāsim himself had willed, so to say, though not without prodding from the Communist-inclined Staff Brigadier Ṭaha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad,[5] one of the more able and resourceful of the army officers and at this juncture "the power behind the throne," as Qāsim's minister for foreign affairs would later put it.[6] On the other hand, it is clear that Qāsim did not will the considerable strength that the Communists were accumulating at the roots in the various units, and in particular among the troops of the First Division stationed at Baṣrah, Nāṣiriyyah, and Dīwāniyyah.[7] In 1963, when the party would generally be in a weaker position than in 1959, it would be discovered that in Baṣrah alone no fewer than 38 officers and 181 soldiers and noncommissioned officers belonged to the party (see Table 45-2). At a secret meeting of the Communist command, held in Prague in 1965, Zakī Khairī, member of the Politbureau, would complain: "We had the First Division in our hands and yet failed to put this to use when the coup of February came."[8]

TABLE 45-1

Army Officers Who Were Communists or Supporters of the Communist Party and Held Important Military or Political Positions in 1959

Name	*Rank and post*	*Nature of link to Communist party*
Jalāl al-Awqātī[a]	Air staff brigadier, Reserves; commander of air force	Retired from air force in 1952 for his Communist sympathies; member, World Peace Council, 1954; cited as member of C.P. by several Communist army officers; trusted by Communist leadership
Ṭāha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad	Staff brigadier, Reserves; director, military planning, ministry of defence; head of Qāsim's personal military intelligence service	Retired in 1953 from his command of 3rd Engineers' Regiment for Communist tendencies; actively cooperated with Communists in 1959 but fell out with them in 1960; cited as member of C.P. by several Communist officers
Dāūd Salmān aj-Janābī	Staff brigadier; commander, Second Division at Kirkūk	Member of C.P. but of the wishy-washy variety.
Hāshim 'Abd-uj-Jabbār	Staff colonel; commander, 20th Infantry Brigade ('Aref's brigade) at Jalawlā'[b]	Card-carrying member of C.P.; party name: Abū Niḍāl
Ḥasan 'Abbūd	Colonel; commander, 5th Brigade at Mosul	Card-carrying member of C.P. by his own admission
Waṣfī Ṭāher	Colonel; Qāsim's chief aide-de-camp	Sympathetic to the Communists; cousin of Zakī Khairī, member of Politbureau of Communist party
Ibrahīm Ḥusain aj-Jubūrī	Colonel; commander, 3rd Battalion, 27th Brigade at al-Washshāsh camp[c]	Card-carrying Communist; leading member of Communist "Union of Soldiers and Officers" 1955-1958
Salmān 'Abd-ul-Majīd al-Ḥaṣṣān	Colonel; commander, 6th Armored Brigade at Abū Ghraib[d]	Sympathetic to the Communists
Fāḍil al-'Azzāwī	Colonel; commander, 1st Brigade at Musayyib	Sympathetic to the Communists
Khaz'al 'Alī as-Sa'dī	Lieutenant colonel; commander, al-Muthannah Tank Regiment at Abū Ghraib[e]	Card-carrying Communist
Fāḍil al-Bayātī	Lieutenant colonel; commandant, detention camp of 2nd Tank Regiment at Abū Ghraib	*Mas'ūl*[d] of the Communist party in the Tanks' Camp at Abū Ghraib
Ghadbān Ḥardān as-Sa'd	Staff lieutenant colonel; Qāsim's military secretary	Card-carrying Communist since 1945
Salīm Dāūd al-Fakhrī	Staff lieutenant colonel; director of broadcasting	Active Communist since 1944; member of Central Committee of League of Iraqi Communists, 1946
'Adnān al-Khayyāl	Lieutenant colonel; commander, 2nd Tank Regiment at Abū Ghraib	Sympathetic to the Communists

Date and place of birth	*Nation and sect*	*Father's occupation*	*Subsequent history*
1914, Baghdād, originally from ʿĀnah	Arab, Sunnī	Middling merchant	Killed in February 1963.
1917, ʿAmārah, originally from Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī	Middling merchant	Killed with Qāsim in February 1963.
1918; Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī	Army officer	Pensioned off on 29 June 1959; killed 11 February 1963.
1917; Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī	Petty trader	In underground, 1963-1967.
1915; Ḥillah	Arab, Shīʿī	Executed in 1916 for part in uprising against Turks	Recalled to Baghdād, December 1961; condemned to life imprisonment 1963.
1918; Baghdād	Arab father, Kurdish mother; Sunnī	Army officer	Killed February 1963.
1917; Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī	Peasant	Imprisoned 1963; subsequently released.
1916; Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī	Horse merchant	Imprisoned 1963; released 1967.
? ; Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī		
? ; Baghdād	Arab, Shīʿī	Tradesman	Killed 1963.
1920; Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī	Shoemaker	Killed 1963.
1920; al-Qurnah	Arab, Sunnī	Police officer	Appointed military attaché, Moscow, May 1959; inspector of army March, 1960.
1920; Mosul	Arab, Sunnī	Middle landowner-*sayyid*	Leader of pro-Chinese Military Revolutionary Committee in sixties.
1923; Baghdād	Arab, Sunnī	Army officer	Sentenced to imprisonment 1963; released 1966.

Name	Rank and post	Nature of link to Communist party
Ḥusain Khaḍr ad-Dūrī	Lieutenant colonel; deputy commander, 2nd Battalion, 20th Brigade at Jalawlā'; member of "People's Court"	Active Communist since 1945; member, League of Iraqi Communists, 1946
Luṭfī Ṭāher	Major (veterinary surgeon); head of press censorship	Cited as Communist by Communist officers; cousin of Zakī Khairī, member of Politbureau of party
Sa'īd Kāḍhim Maṭar	Major; deputy commander of military police	Member of the Communist party since 1945

Date and place of birth	Nation and sect	Father's occupation	Subsequent history
1920; Baghdād, originally from ad-Dūr	Arab, Sunnī	Small dealer in wood	Executed 11 February 1963.
1916; Baghdād	Arab father, Kurdish mother; Sunnī	Army officer	Imprisoned 1963; released later.
1919; Najaf	Arab, Shī'ī	Municipal clerk	In underground, 1963-1967.

[a]Cousin of Hāshem Jawād, Qāsim's minister for foreign affairs (1959-1963).

[b]A camp about 140 kilometers northeast of Baghdād.

[c]This camp is to the west of Baghdād.

[d]I.e., comrade-in-charge.

[e]The Abu Ghraib camp lies about 15 kilometers to the west of Baghdād.

However, in line with Qāsim's balancing technique, the officer commanding the division in 1959 was the Shī'ī and pronouncedly conservative Staff Brigadier Sayyid Ḥamīd Sayyid Ḥusain. All in all, when the Communist tide was at the flood, 235 army officers at the least, including 3 brigadiers, 18 colonels, and 27 lieutenant colonels (see Table 45-4) were Communists or had, in one way or another, signified their support to the party. In a purely numerical sense, this was no mean advance: the Free Officers' movement that pulled the July 14 coup counted only 172 officers in 1957.[9] Of course, the Communists had more powerful–and more solid–backing among the rank and file and, above all, in ar-Rashīd camp, which lies to the southeast of Baghdād.[10] But perhaps their strongest anchor was in the air force. Its commander, Alī Staff Brigadier Jalāl al-Awqātī, was

their man (see Table 45-1). More than that, in 1963 no fewer than 70 out of the total of about 300 pilots that the force comprised, turned out to be Communists.[11]

In the meantime, the expansion of the People's Resistance Force was going forward. Its strength rose, on a conservative estimate, from 11,000 in August 1958[12] to about 25,000 in May 1959.[13] As to its dominant coloring, there was little doubt. Although its chief, Ṭaha al-Bāmīrnī, was not a member of the party, its organizers were frequently graduates of the Reserves College,[14] which was thick with Communists. Many of the unit commanders were also Communists. Thus the detachments in the north of the country came under Communist Captain Mahdī Ḥamīd,[15] and those in the south under Communist Major Jawād Kādhim.[16]

Throughout Iraq, even as the Ba'thīs went to earth, and the right-wing nationalist Independence party was dying away; the Communists were moving ahead and, in Baghdād and the south, with giant strides. The appointment in March of the Communist Luṭfī Tāher[17] as chief censor and of Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb, an ex-member of the Central Committee of the Communist party,[18] as director general of guidance, by enabling them to tighten their grip on the radio and the press, gave them additional leverage over the masses. Their own central organ, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, attained at this time a daily circulation of 23,000, when a year before no newspaper in Iraq could sell more than 2,000 copies.[19] Their cells also multiplied many times over. At full tide, according to a veteran Communist and a companion of Fahd,[20] the party counted some 20,000 registered members and candidates. This accords with Ba'thī estimates.[21] However, on the basis of testimony by Communist prisoners, the First Branch of the Directorate General of Security puts the figure at no less than 25,000. The auxiliary organizations of the party or the associations that moved within its orbit grew at an even swifter pace. The league for the Defence of Women's Rights comprised on March 8, by its own reckoning, 25,000 members[22] and, according to one of its leaders,[23] 40,000 in the middle of 1959. The Iraqi Democratic Youth Federation, which was licensed on March 29, claimed in mid-June a strength of 84,000 members.[24] The National Conference of Peasants' Associations, held in Baghdād on April 16, was said to represent about 2,000 associations with a total membership of 250,000.[25] The General Federation of Trade Unions maintained on July 8 that it spoke for 51

organizations embracing 275,000 workers and artisans of all sorts.[26] The figures are probably inflated and, because a person could participate in more than one of these bodies, the counting is duplicative. However, the people who lived through those times still remember with a certain awe the vast sea of men that the party could evoke at a moment's notice.

TABLE 45-2

Baṣrah's Communist Party Military Organization in 1963: Members Known to the Authorities

Rank	*No. of members*	*Distribution of membership*	*No.*
Civilians	10[a]	Members of Baṣrah Party Military Committee	6
Officers		Recruiting officers	2
Majors	1	Air base	3
Captains	4	Eighth Squadron	37
First lieutenants	16	Radar unit	17
Second lieutenants	17[b]	Naval base	14
Rank and File		Naval base workshops	5
Noncommissioned officers	47	Riverine force	3
Soldiers	134	Coastal battery	13
Total	229	Port	4
		Fifteenth Brigade	11
		Twenty-Third Regiment	4
		Electricity Department	9
		Unspecified	101
		Total	229

[a]Including 5 members of Baṣrah Military Party Committee.

[b]Including 1 member of Baṣrah Military Party Committee.

Source: Data taken from a chart at the Directorate of the First Branch, Directorate General of Security, Baghdād.

But how deep, how stable, how real was this movement of people toward the party? A good many of the individuals concerned and, in particular, those that attached themselves to the party's auxiliary organizations, were of the variety of what came to be called "the July 14 Communists" or "the Communists of the flood-tide"-time-servers, bandwagon-climbers, people who thought that Qāsim favored the party, people to whom the party seemed unbeatable. There was also the element of fear at work, such fear as prevails in revolutionary times. Significantly, on May 24 the party's central

organ carried under the title “Let people free themselves from fear!” the following item:

TABLE 45-3

Communist Party Military Organizations in the Camps in the Central Region, Including Greater Baghdād, in 1963: Members Known to the Authorities

Camp	*Position of camp*	*No. of members*
al-Washshāsh Camp	West of Baghdād	67
Abū Ghraib Camp	Northwest of Baghdād	71
ar-Rashīd Camp	Southeast of Baghdād	[a]

[a]No particulars, but identified by Sultān Mulla ‘Alī, member of the party’s leading Military Committee, as “the most important stronghold of the party from the point of view of both greatness of number and oldness of standing” (Statement in Iraqi Police Files No, QS/5 and QS/120).

Source: Data taken from a chart at the Directorate of the First Branch, Directorate General of Security, Baghdād.

TABLE 45-4

Number, According to Rank, of Known Army Officers Who Were Communists or Supporters of the Communist Party in 1959

Rank	*No. of members or supporters of party*
Brigadiers	3
Colonels	18
Lieutenant colonels	27
Majors	37
Captains	34
First lieutenants	52
Second lieutenants	64
Total	235

Source: Based on lists of Communist officers or of officers supporting the C.P. furnished to Ba‘thī investigators in February-March 1963 by Communist Colonels Ibrahīm Husain aj-Jubūrī, Ḥasan ‘Abbūd, ‘Alī Khālid, ‘Abd-ur-Riḍa ‘Ubaid, Communist Major Muḥammad Jawād al-‘Asalī, Communist Captains Kāmel Muḥsin and Mahdī Iḥsān al-Bayātī, and Communist First Lieutenant Ṭāreq Ṭah’a Darwīsh. Iraqi Police Files QS/5 and QS/119 refer.

> We are “bugbears”! How terrible! I heard this from the mouth of a “friend.” . . . He said: “I know a senior official who places *lttīḥād-ush-Sha‘b* on his desk and does not read it. He is simply warding off a suspicion. I also know a district which has only five Communists but the district acclaims your party. This is terror! The people, fearing you, shout applause to you!”[27]

But fear is certainly not a decisive explanation: in 1963, when the boot was on the other foot, the Ba‘th was never able at any time to bring together one-third of the crowds that the Communists attracted in 1959. Nor is it simply or essentially a matter of greater organizational resources or of differences in the public mood in the two contrasted years. When all is said, it must be recognized that the Communists also possessed a genuine mass support. If, for example, in the nationalist quarters of al-A‘ḍhamiyyah and at-Takārtah, or in the well-to-do district of al-Manṣūr, they inspired fear, in such poor and strictly laboring places such as ath-Thawrah town or Tabbat al-Akrād on ar-Raṣāfah side, and Kreimāt or ash-Shawwākah districts on the Karkh side of Baghdād, a thrill of hope greeted their rise to great influence. This a faithful history must put on record.

On 28 April 1959, as the flow of people toward the party was at its fullest, the Communists put forward a demand for an overt role in the Council of Ministers. Back on 5 November 1958, their Central Committee had sought to impress upon Qāsim, in a private memorandum, that the “efficient and overwhelming” forces of the party formed the “real shield” of his government, and that the continued exclusion of Communists from the cabinet would produce “an insurmountable contradiction,”[28] but had failed to move him. After the collapse of the Mosul rising, the committee had reopened the subject, and in long-drawn-out secret negotiations[29] had attempted to soften Qāsim and win him over to the idea. At one point, ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah, member of the Politbureau, ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl, the editor of *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, and other leading Communists had signified to him their eagerness to take four ministerial portfolios, including that of Interior.[30] Qāsim had seemed at first to turn a willing ear to them, but had in

the end put his foot down. Now the Central Committee took its demand to the people, giving it wide publicity, and presenting its fulfillment as an "urgent national need." The party, it maintained, was still the object of an "unjustified discrimination," although it had shouldered "the greatest responsibility on the popular level." This "unnatural" situation had in the past affected negatively "the progress of the Revolution" and was bound in the future "to harm and weaken the confidence between the people and the national government." The committee, therefore, called for the "faithful representation" in the cabinet of "all the loyal national forces" and for "the abandonment of the sensitivity concerning our party." "It is high time to settle this issue," it concluded.[31]

The party's move echoed far and wide. CENTO felt uneasy. In neighboring Arab lands nationalists beat an alarm. In Washington, Allen Dulles, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, described the situation as "the most dangerous in the world today."[32]

Qāsim reacted on April 30. “Narrow groupings, partisanship, and parties,” he declared at a reception given by the Federation of Trade Unions, “are of no benefit to the country at this time” and could only bring comfort to “imperialism,” which had been trying hard “to split our ranks . . . and play us one against the other.”[33] It was more than a public rebuff: the need for the party’s existence in an indefinite “transitional period” was called in question.

Undeterred, more than 300,000 people–one million in the Communist estimate[34]–led by members of the Central Committee of the party, marched on the following day–the first of May–through ar-Rashīd Street, chanting rhythmically: “ *‘Āsha Za‘īmī ‘Abd-ul-Karīmī, al-Ḥizb ash-Shuyū’fī-l Ḥukmī Maṭlabon Aḍhīmī*”– “Long Live the Leader ‘Abd-ul-Karīm! The Communist Party in the Government is a Mighty Demand!”[35]

For its part, and for the first time, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* chopped logic with Qāsim, but without once mentioning his name. It rejected as “faulty” and “highly harmful” his “assumption” that “party life is a cause of dissension.” “Fascists” and others, it said, had in the past argued in the same strain to justify their “dictatorial rule.”[36] If the country was going through “a period of transition,” as Qāsim had maintained, the difficult tasks characteristic of such periods necessitated all the more a truly representative coalition government.[37] *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* also suggested that the introduction of Communists into the cabinet could put an end to the “spontaneous” behavior of the masses of the people. It was, it affirmed, in great part by virtue of “the form of composition of state power” and “the presence of weak or suspect elements in authority” that “the masses had time and again been forced to appropriate into their hands the question of rectifying some deficiencies, blocking certain gaps, and safeguarding the peace and security of the Republic.”[38]

On May 11, as tension heightened, the British government announced that it was selling “substantial” arms to Iraq in the hope of propping Qāsim up and enabling him, in the words of its minister of state, “to maintain an independent line of action.”[39] Three days later, in a speech to Iraqi industrialists and men of capital, Qāsim made a point of emphasizing that “we are a neutral people” and renewed his opposition to “parties and partyism” in the current stage.[40] Then cunningly and with the help of Muḥammad Ḥadīd, the vice-chairman of the National Democratic party–its

not so accommodating chairman, Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, had gone to Moscow for medical treatment–Qāsim defied the Communists to choose between hanging on to his sleeve or striking out entirely on their own. The defiance was implied in a statement that Hadīd put out on May 19 in the name of the National Democrats, in which he said that they could not remain insensible to the wishes of "the leader of the country" and were, therefore, abandoning all activity forthwith.[41] This came like a bolt out of the blue, for only eleven days earlier the National Democrats had spoken up in favor of the Communists entering the government.[42]

Shortly afterwards, the Politbureau of the party met behind closed doors to deliberate upon what it should do next. Its members were not of one mind: some, the more militant, led by Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, the party's secretary, stood apparently against any yielding of ground, but most shared ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah's mood to meet Qāsim halfway.[43] A record of their discussions is unfortunately not available. But an idea of what went on can be gathered from the remarks that follow, which were made at a secret conclave of the Communist command held in Prague on 19 November 1965:

> *Comrade Jalīl* (Zakī Khakīrī, member of the Politbureau): The question of power was taken up in earnest for the first time in 1959. . . . Those who opposed[44] the participation of the party in the government stubbornly refused to consider the matter in class terms, although the command of the party[45] wanted it discussed from such a standpoint. The momentary political view prevailed: Qāsim was looked upon not as the leader of the bourgeois class but as a military individual of diverse inclinations. . . . Had the party been oriented after 1958 toward power, the Revolution would have triumphed. This was the basic shortcoming and not the need for army officers. . . .
> *Comrade Ma'mūn* (Thābet Ḥabīb al-ʻĀnī, member of the Central Committee): What is your opinion of the decisions adopted by the Central Committee at its meeting in 1959[46] and of the committee's appraisal of this very issue? Was this diffidence as regards participation in the government the attitude of some of the comrades or of whole organizations?
> *Comrade Jalīl:* I do not wish to elaborate. I was among those whose erroneous ideas led the meeting astray. I have already admitted my

> error. . . . The rub of the matter is that since the discussions of 1959 there has been no daring for victory.[47]

It is not difficult to think of the reasons that could have led the Politbureau to refrain from showing its teeth to Qāsim or from making a direct bid for power. The majority of the Politbureau, at least, knew that not a few of the old members of the party were still apprentice-Communists, that many of the new members had not been properly screened, that a great part of the enormous bandwagon that the party had called to life could swiftly vanish in any test of strength with Qāsim, and that furthermore, as party documents of a later date reveal,[48] a course toward seizure of power could very well ensue in a murderous civil war. The majority must also have realized that much of the party's recently won support among the army officers was of the wishy-washy kind. Moreover, if it had reason to be confident about the party's influence on the rank and file in the First Division and, to a lesser degree, on the command of the Second Division, it could not afford to discount the popularity of Qāsim with the soldiers and noncommissioned officers in all the divisions, nor ignore that Brigadier Ṣiddīq Ḥasan, commander of the Fourth Division, reputedly tended toward conservatism; and that the apolitical Brigadiers Khalīl ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān and Ghālib ʻAbd-ul-ʻAzīz, the commanders of the Third and Fifth Divisions, were Qāsim's personal friends. When, sometime after the meeting of the Politbureau, Communist Colonel Ibrahīm Husain aj-Jubūrī, commander of the Third Battalion Twenty-seventh Brigade, and Communist Lieutenant Colonel Khazʻal ʻAlī as-Saʻdī, commander of Al-Muthannah Tank Regiment, pressed at a party gathering in the house of Communist Major Kāḍhim ʻAbd-ul-Karīm, for a seizure of power, ʻAṭṣhān Ḍayyūl al-Azairjāwī, secretary of the Military Organization of the party,[49] adduced Qāsim's popularity to discourage them.[50]

But perhaps the factor that had the greatest weight in the decision to beat a retreat was the pressure that the Communist Party of the Soviet Union appears to have brought to bear upon the Iraqi Communist leadership. According to ʻAdnān Jilmirān, the then member of the Mosul Local Committee, the Russians sent at this point to Baghdād George Tallū, a member of the Iraqi Politbureau, who had been undergoing medical

treatment in Moscow, with an urgent request to the Iraqi party to avoid provoking Qāsim, and withdraw its bid to participate in the government.[51] The Russians apparently had no wish to cut all their bridges with Nāṣir, or jeopardize their new policy of "peaceful coexistence," or wreck the chances of a visit to Washington which Khruschev contemplated and which he would eventually make in September. Later it would be rumored that the Russians pointed out to the Iraqi Communists that a Communist state in Iraq, if it did not invite an intervention by the West–according to Qāsim's minister for foreign affairs, the Americans did at the time move warplanes from Germany to Adana Air base[52]–would, at the very least, consolidate all the Arab governments against them; and that, having no common frontiers with their country, they could not intervene militarily to save their necks, should they attempt a coup and fail, or succeed in seizing the power but have trouble in holding on to it.

The disfavor with which left-wing Communists viewed the decision to fall back would not find expression in party literature until years later, and then in an intensely sharpened form, as in the following passages from a 1967 internal circular:

> Our enemies and bourgeois friends frightened us with the possibility of civil war, a possibility for which, it is true, there were objective grounds; but had the civil war taken place at that time it would have in all probability turned in our favor and not in a dreadful slaughter of Communists and revolutionary democrats, as after 8 February 1963, when it actually broke out and the reaction triumphed, having itself chosen the appropriate moment to set it off. Our shying from civil war in 1959, rather than securing us, made the disaster inevitable. . . .
>
> We let slip through our fingers a historic opportunity and allowed a squandering of a unique revolutionary situation to the detriment of the people: after the defeat of the Mosul conspiracy Qāsim had found himself in a tight spot and for a brief period, that of the flood-tide, could not balance against the Left the discomfited Right. Our party became, in effect, the master of the situation . . . and should have gone on to conquer power . . .–even though civil war and foreign intervention appeared possible, if not unavoidable. To say that the masses, loving Qāsim, would have stood against us is untrue. . . . Had

> we seized the helm and without delay armed the people, carried out a radical agrarian reform, secured the masses in their interests and their rights, granted to the Kurds their autonomy and, by revolutionary measures, transformed the army into a democratic force, our regime would have with extraordinary speed attained to the widest popularity and would have released great mass initiatives, enabling the millions to make their own history.[53]

Already on 20 May 1959, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* had begun smoothing the path for a retreat. The Communists, it said "have not and will never" make the grant to them of a share in the government "a condition for supporting . . . the leader Qāsim," nor did they consider that there was anything "urgent" about the official recognition of their activity.[54]

The actual falling back came two days later, when the Politbureau gave notice that, by reason of the importance it attached to "the unity of the national forces," and inasmuch as the "widest masses of the people" had been won over to the party's viewpoint, it was calling off its "educational" campaign for seats in the Council of Ministers.[55] In an accordant internal circular, it directed that for the earlier policy of unconditional support of Qāsim and his regime, the party was henceforth to substitute the formulas "Solidarity-Struggle-Solidarity" and "Criticism-Unity-Criticism," and to be guided by the objective of a "government resting on a sound democratic basis."[56]

At the same time, in another public statement–even as a considerable splinter left-wing group of National Democrats were putting their feet down and openly refusing to disband–the Politbureau made plain that the Communists had no intention of abandoning their political activities. "Loyal party work," it said, "can under no circumstances be viewed as a defiance of the government." By deciding to immobilize their party, the National Democratic leaders had put an unwarranted "negative" construction on the words of the premier. Calling back to mind the past services of the Communists, the Politbureau brought out that at one point "when danger hanged threateningly over the Republic and the democratic policy represented by the leader 'Abd-ul-Karīm," the party took "the grave decision to defend the Republic by force of arms, if necessary."[57]

By way of retort, Qāsim declared on the evening of 23 May, at a hastily convened news conference, that the step of the National Democratic leaders "entirely accords with my views," and that it would not be proper to permit "certain groups" to start defending "special interests."[58] "I had no partners," he added, "when I exploded the volcanoes of revolution. . . . Is it not then my right to ask for time in order to explode the remainder of that which I possess?"[59] But Qāsim's rebuke of the Communists remained mild and, for the most part, indirect. Indeed, in an interview on the twenty-eighth with the British journalist Anthony Nutting, he made clear that he considered them to be "struggling for the good of the country." "They are sons of the people; they are faithful people," he said.[60]

Qāsim, however, was taking no chances. On 24 May, he pulled up the reins on the People's Resistance Force: he forbad it from carrying out arrests or house searches without the sanction of the military governor general. On the same day, he began easing the Communists out of their influence in the broadcasting field:[61] by 12 June the Communist-inclined *Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār* would be calling Baghdād Radio "a den of opportunists and reactionaries."[62] Next Qāsim turned his attention to the apparatus of the state, but here he appears to have proceeded more circumspectly: "news is arriving from here and there," complained *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* on 12 June, "of the institution of special branches in a number of government departments to keep watch on the progressive elements."[63] Qāsim took also other steps. Reverting to his method of balance, he arranged for the issuing of an amnesty order on 11 June,[64] under which several hundreds of nationalists and some supporters of the monarchy were freed from prison or exile.[65] By the same token, he strengthened the hand of the National Democrats, lending them the weight of official favor in a fierce contest which they were then having with the Communists over the control of the newly licensed Peasants' Associations: being unable to compete with the Communists in the cities, the National Democrats sought to dig in in the countryside.

The Communists answered in the only ways open to them: they tightened their hold over their auxiliary organizations by creating a Supreme Executive Bureau of the Committees for the Defence of the Republic[66] and activating the Liaison Committee of the Federations, Associations, and Trade Unions;[67] they displayed their huge mass support in the streets

repeatedly; they sent up thundering and insistent shouts of “No Deviation! No Reaction!”;[68] they wondered in caustic tones about the “secret” of the “sudden enthusiasm” of the National Democrats for “manufacturing” peasants’ delegations, petitions, and demonstrations right in the wake of the decision to “freeze” their party;[69] they warned of grave peril for the premier’s life, of “new plots” being hatched, and of impending “destructive actions which will be blamed on the Communists.”[70]

As the first anniversary of the Revolution approached, things seemed to be moving toward a showdown. There had been violence from about the middle of June onwards in various parts of the country. On the thirteenth, a deputation of National Democratic peasants, carrying petitions to Qāsim against the leaders of the General Union of Peasants’ Associations, was set upon and beaten up by a Communist crowd in front of his office in the Defence Ministry.[71] “They had been chanting suspicious slogans, which angered the people,” explained *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* afterwards.[72] On 15 June in the Muntafiq province, the landlord Muḥammad an-Naṣrallah fired upon his peasants for anticipating their right to the crop, killing five of them.[73] There were similar shootings in other places such as al-Ḥayy, Sūq-ush-Shuyūkh, and Dīwāniyyah.[74] Sensing that the ground was slipping under the feet of the Communists, landowners already breathed more freely, and in certain instances were taking the law into their own hands and settling with the more active peasants or members of peasants’ associations. On 21 June the Secretariat of the Democratic Youth Federation also complained of “wicked attacks” on its followers and its branches in certain conservative districts in Baghdād and elsewhere, and of the indifferent attitude of the local authorities, and warned that “the situation is critical and could at any moment lead to serious consequences,” and that “while our Federation has been urging its members not to reply to provocations, it is not in a position to sit with folded arms . . . and can on its own put an end to the criminal acts by committing its forces and crushing the gangs to pieces.”[75]

But far more disturbing from Qāsim’s point of view were persistent reports of imminent attempts to use Communist-officered army units against him. Although it is now clear that there was no foundation to any of the stories, Qāsim apparently believed, at least for a time, that the Communists were out to get his scalp. In a series of speeches on 14, 15, and 16 June at the Staff College, the Officers’ Club, and to the Twenty-fifth

Infantry Brigade and the soldiers and noncommissioned officers of the Baghdād garrison, he hammered on one theme: the need to keep the parties out of the army. “I do not belong to any party”; “I do not wish parties or tendencies, whatever their color, to penetrate into the ranks of the armed forces under any circumstances,” he said over and over again.[76] On the twenty-fourth, the nationalist-Qāsimite *Ath-Thawrah* directly charged “a certain party” with trying to involve the military in politics.[77] This was followed by the administering of two heavy blows to the Communists: on the twenty-sixth Qāsim terminated the armed nightly patrols by the People’s Resistance Force and prohibited the use of weapons by its members except for training purposes or the carrying out of authorized special assignments;[78] on the twenty-ninth he pensioned off six Communist army officers, including Staff Brigadier Dāūd aj-Janābī, commander of the Second Division.[79]

To the first blow, the Communists replied by combining themselves on 28 June with the left-wingers of the National Democrats and of the Kurdish Democratic party in a “National Union Front,” and using this body to prop up demands for a rearming “on a wide scale” of an expanded People’s Resistance Force and “the inclusion of the representatives of all the political forces defending the Republic . . . in the responsibility of rule at the present time or after the establishment of a democratic parliamentary regime.”[80] They thus renewed, but in a less exigent manner, their bid for a place in the government.

To the second blow, their Politbureau reacted more sharply. It put all party members on the alert, and in an internal circular issued on 3 July enjoined them

> not to permit the wresting by the authorities or by criminal gangs of any of the party’s gains and to answer with firmness, especially in the regions and towns where the party enjoys widespread influence, every measure directed against the party or any of the popular organizations, even if this should lead to clashes or mutual fighting.[81]

Clearly the hard-liners had succeeded in asserting themselves in the councils of the party. However, the position to which the circular gave voice

was, it will be noted, in essence merely one of active self-defense.

At any rate, on the night of July 4, bloody encounters occurred in the districts of al-Aʿḍhamiyyah and al-Faḍl in Baghdād between the Communists and members of the People's Resistance, on the one hand, and Baʿthī and conservative elements, on the other. Fahd Nuʿmān, a Communist, was killed, and sixteen from both sides were injured.[82]

This brought the Resistance a reproof from Qāsim, but in the gentlest terms. "The loyalty of certain of its members, nay their extreme loyalty . . . ," he said at a reception given on July 5 by the commander of the force, "led them to exceed their duties. . . . They were prompted wholly by their devotion and their chivalry . . . and did not understand the results of their actions." While emphasizing that under the law the Resistance must take its orders only from the military command, he described it as "the impregnable fortress of the country." On the whole, in this speech Qāsim showed a disposition to conciliate the Communists. He thus promised to make the transition period "a very short one," after which "I myself will ask the parties to come into action" and "will give support to the establishment of the National Front." All the parties, he added,

> are my brethren. The Democratic party is a brother party and is in accord with me. The Communist party is a brother party and is in accord with me. The [Kurdish Democratic] party is a brother party and is in accord with me. And the free in this homeland and the independent are my brethren and in accord with me and all are behind the leader(!) . . . It is I who unite . . . between the different parts of this people.[83]

On the same day, the Politbureau cancelled the instructions contained in its internal circular of 3 July,[84] but in a public statement on the ninth made clear in no uncertain terms that it was not prepared to prostrate itself before the premier. "Much as our party," it declared,

> has given regard to the standpoints of the leader ʿAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, it has, by virtue of the status it possesses among broad sections of the people, expressed, and will in the future continue to express, its own special views on some political questions–the need for party life

> and a National Union Front, among other things–if it deems that such views are better calculated to safeguard the Republic or the common interest.

But the Politbureau had not the least intention to carry its disaccord with Qāsim to the point of an irrevocable parting of ways: "in adopting such independent attitudes . . . our party is only exercising one of its elemental democratic rights . . . and this should in no way be taken to connote a desire on its part to oppose the national government." Its very demand for cabinet representation "reflects the confidence it reposes . . . in the leadership" of the premier. On the other hand, the Politbureau found it

> necessary to affirm a well-known truth, namely, that the Iraqi Communist party, strong in the support and trust of the widest masses of the people and solidly tied to the widest democratic groups in the National Union Front, constitutes, together with its allies, *the basic political force in the country* upon whose firm and sincere backing the national government could rely for the preservation of the Republic and the assuring of its triumphant march toward liberation and democracy.[85]

Obviously, there is in the statement a blending of two distinct notes, defiance and conciliation–a mirroring, in other words, of a compromise between the hardliners and the moderates within the Politbureau, that is, essentially between Ḥusain ar-Raḍī and ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah.

At the time, unaware of the retreat of the party from the militant position expressed in the internal circular of July 3, outside observers caught only the first note, making much of it.

There was also an attempt to attribute the partial hardening of the party's stand to the influence of the Chinese Communists: according to the Middle East correspondent of *The Christian Science Monitor, "a* group with a very real interest in an accurate assessment of the situation in Iraq" believed that while the Russians might have been pressing the Iraqi Communists for a slowdown in activity, the Chinese or, to be specific, Burhān Shahīdī, the Moslem-born vice-chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese

People's Consultative Congress,[86] egged them on to push strongly forward.[87] However, there is no evidence of any kind to support the notion of a Chinese interference in the affairs of the Iraqi party. Burhan Shahīdī was not in Baghdād at this point: he had arrived on March 17 at the head of a Chinese cultural delegation,[88] but had left for home on April 21.[89] This is not to deny that the statement of the Politbureau just referred to may have found favor with Peking and disfavor with Moscow, if one is to judge by the promptitude with which Peking publicized it and the utter neglect which it incurred in Moscow.[90]

But what manner of response did Qāsim give to the statement? He abruptly abandoned his dilly-dallying: on 13 and 14 July, in moves to mollify the Communists and at the same time place them on the defensive, he undertook to legalize political parties after six months, and appointed Dr. Nazīhah ad-Dulaimī, a gynecologist, a card-carrying Communist, and the leader of the League for the Defence of Women's Rights, as minister of municipalities; Dr. Faiṣal as-Sāmīr, a left-wing National Democrat, a traveling companion of the party, and the president of the Teachers' Union, as minister of guidance; and 'Awnī Yūsuf, also a friend of the Communists and a Kurdish Democratic higher justiciary, as minister of works and housing.[91] All three had appended their signatures two weeks before on the Charter of the National Union Front.[92] While still regarding themselves, in an official sense, unrepresented in the regime, the Communists telegraphed the premier: "By coopting faithful and patriotic elements into the cabinet, you have taken one further step . . . toward strengthening the solidarity between the people and their national government under your leadership."[93]

Qāsim had feared lest the reins should slip from his hands, and had been anxious to keep the Communists away from the more critical positions from which they might have been able to pull him down. The last thing he desired was to make an end of them, for it was obvious to him that were he to settle with the Communists, it could not be long before the nationalists would make him pay in full the bitter score that lay between them.

46

KIRKUK, JULY 1959

Nothing harmed the Communists more than the bloody doings at Kirkūk on July 14-16. Yet it is now certain that these doings were neither premeditated nor authorized by their leaders in Baghdād. In part, they must be ascribed to the nature of the times: acts of extreme cruelty against adversaries are not uncommon in moments of social instability and extraordinary agitation. But the more immediate blame falls clearly upon fanatic Kurds of differing tendencies. It is significative that all but 3 of the 31 officially reported as killed, and all but 6 of the 130 known to have been injured in the incidents were Turkmen, and that all but 4 of the 28 perpetrators of excesses executed on 22 June 1963 were Kurds.[1] There were, it is true, assaults on the lives of people through private malice. For example, the mother of one of the victims testified before the Second Martial Court that the accused, who were members of the People's Resistance, had feared that her son would win away the headship of a district from their father, a rival candidate.[2] Again, a personal grudge seems to have been the motive of the member of the Youth Union who was behind the killing of two of his employers, the owners of al-'Alamein Cinema in Kirkūk.[3] On the whole, however, it was in the inveterate enmity between Kurds and Turkmen that the outrageous fury that gripped the city had its roots.

The Communists did take an active part in the outbreak, but *as Kurds*. The ends they sought were not Communist but Kurdish ends. Their communism was, in most instances, skin deep. What, in effect, seems to have happened was the bending by the Kurds of all the auxiliary organizations of the Communist party to their own needs, that is, to the pursuit of their deadly feud with their old antagonists, the Turkmen.

Kirkūk, an oil center, lying 180 miles north of Baghdād, had been Turkish through and through in the not too distant past. By degrees, Kurds

moved into the city from the surrounding villages. With the growth of the oil industry, their migration intensified. By 1959, they had swollen to more than one-third of the population, and the Turkmen had declined to just over half, the Assyrians and Arabs accounting, in the main, for the rest of the total of 120,000.[4] Other Turkish towns, such as Arbīl, had undergone a similar process: Arbīl itself was in great measure Kurdified, and the change occurred peacefully. But the Kirkūklis, who maintained close cultural links with Turkey, were of a tougher fiber and united by a stronger sense of ethnic identity.

As at Mosul, the animosity was sharpened by a near parallelism between the racial and economic divisions: in a preponderant sense, the creditors were Turkmen, the debtors Kurds; the big merchants, the middling shopkeepers, the artisans Turkmen; the oil workers, the menial laborers, the petty vendors Kurds. But there were many poor Turkmen, and not a few well-to-do Kurds.

After the July 14 Revolution, the animosity assumed a distinct political form for, according to the Kirkūk chief of police, "on the founding of the associations, organizations, and trade unions, most of the Kurds adhered to them . . . whereas the Turkmen banded together under Turkmenian nationalist colors."[5]

Naturally, the situation became very tense. In the last week of October 1958, a serious clash occurred. The troops, ordered out to restore peace, split along ethnic lines, the Kurdish soldiers joining in with their blood brothers against the Turkmen. When in the end the tumult was composed, the Arab local commander, Staff Brigadier Nāḍhim aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī, tried to persuade the two communities to work together through a "Committee for National Cooperation."[6] But in the following January there were more disturbances, this time apparently sparked by an assault by armed Kurds on one of the Turkish quarters. Several people reportedly died.[7] On 22 March, as the country was entering "the period of the flood-tide," the Kirkūk Local Committee of the Communist party, now the chief power in the city, found it necessary to issue a special handbill in which it warned that "reactionaries and chauvinists were exciting in the hearts of Turkmen the fear of Kurds and Arabs and at the same time arousing suspicions and spreading calumnies among the Kurdish masses against their Turkmen brethren," and summoned all the citizens to "vigilance, . . . unity, and brotherhood."[8] From

the point of view of the Kurds, violence no longer made sense, for not only was the Communist Local Committee in their hands, but also much of the government of Kirkūk. Ma‘rūf al-Barazanchī, the Kurdish Communist secretary of the Peace Partisans, was the chief of the municipality. ‘Awnī Yūsuf, a Kurdish Democrat, was the president of the court. The Kurdish Communist Captain Mahdī Ḥamīd was the leader of the Resistance Forces. Staff Brigadier Dāūd aj-Janābī, an Arab, who had taken over command of the troops on 14 March, belonged, as pointed out elsewhere,[9] to the Communists; and inasmuch as the Kurds, in their bulk, had from the beginning taken the side of his party and now constituted its most natural support, there was no wish or intention of theirs that he did not fulfill. In brief, the Kurds reigned virtually unopposed. For the solution of their historic conflict with the Turkmen, they had at their disposal well nigh the entire legal and political machinery of the city, and had indeed already begun adapting it to their purposes.

It was the threat to this ascendancy implied in the sudden removal on 29 June of Brigadier Dāūd aj-Janābī and Captain Mahdī Ḥamīd that probably changed the mood of the Kurds, and so charged the atmosphere as to make possible the ghastly violence in the days of July 14-16.

It is still uncertain whether the outbreak was a planned thing, or simply an extreme variant of recurrent–almost instinctive–effusions of ethnic hatred, or the result of a conjunction of the one and the other. The Turkmen in Kirkūk insist that it was prepared beforehand, and pin the blame on the Kurdish leaders of the Communist organizations–more specifically, among others, on ‘Abd-uj-Jabbār Beirūzkhān, chief of the Union of Democratic Youth; Retired Captain Fātiḥ Mulla Dāūd aj-Jabbārī, a founder of the National Front; and on the already mentioned secretary of the Peace Partisans. In support, they adduce alleged warnings by certain members of these organizations to relatives and acquaintances to evacuate their women and children from Kirkūk before 14 July and to be sure, if remaining behind, to wear only Kurdish costumes or the costumes of the People’s Resistance. They also claim that Kurdish tribesmen had been introduced into the city from the neighboring country in the days preceding the outbreak.[10] But well-informed foreign diplomatic officers, who do not wish to be named, doubt that the violence was contrived, and are inclined to the view that it was touched off by the fierce determination of the Kurdish

Communists and Kurdish Democrats to have only one city-wide July 14 procession and to run it themselves, and the no less grim resolve of the Turkmen to organize their own independent column. For their part, the Kirkūk chief of police and the Kirkūk chief of security, who appear to have had opposite sympathies,[11] do not agree about the side from which the initial provocations came: the chief of police points to the Turkmen,[12] the chief of security to "the noncommissioned officers and some of the soldiers" of the predominantly Kurdish Works' Company and Military Police Detachment of the Second Division.[13] As for the Communists, they point to paid hirelings of the Anti-Subversion Committee of CENTO.

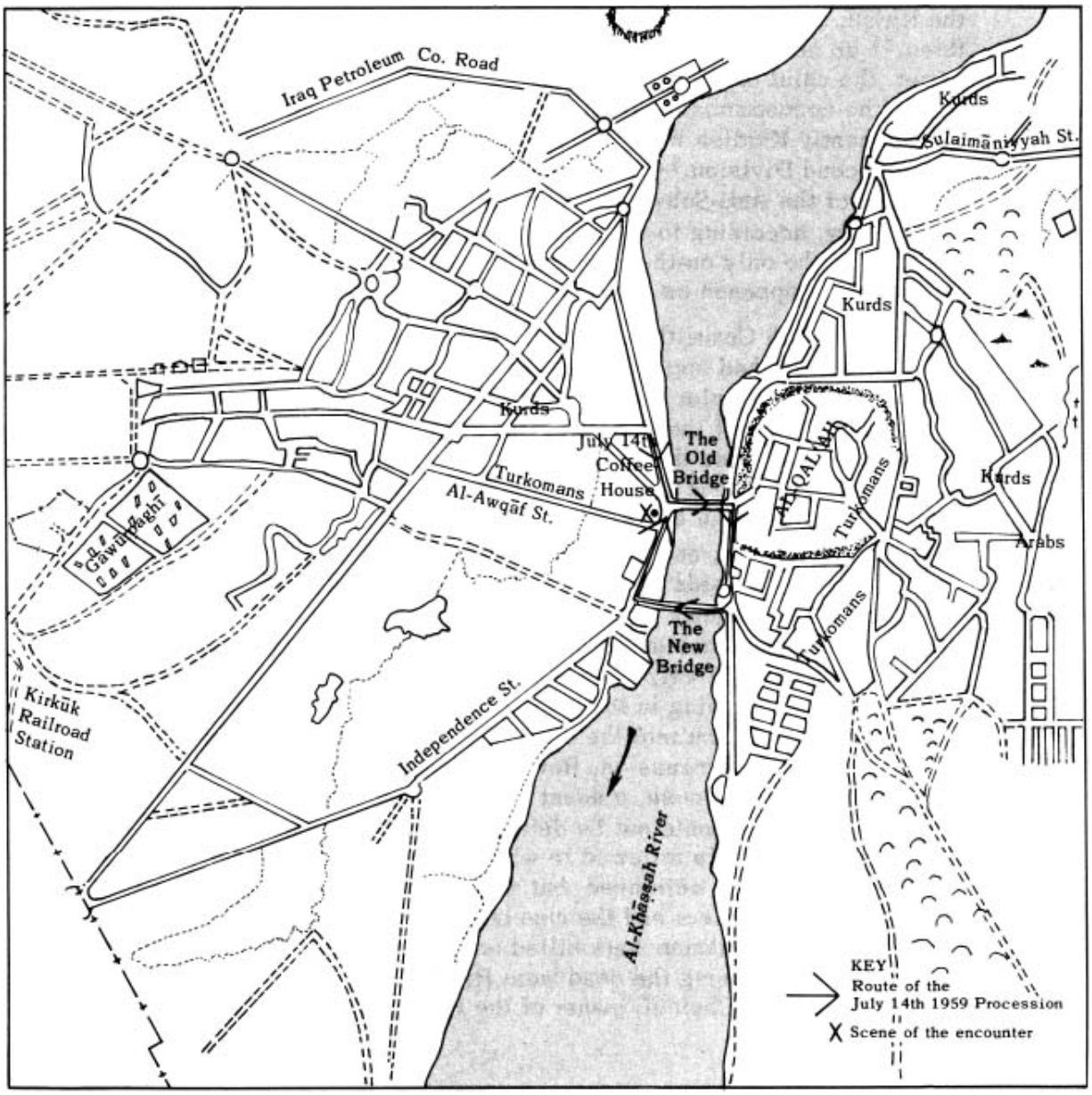
Anyhow, according to the chief of police–and his account, if sketchy, is the only on-the-spot inside account that could be traced–this is what happened on July 14:

> The Kirkūk Committee for the Celebration of the Anniversary of the Revolution had appointed for six in the evening of 14 July a procession of the popular organizations that was to march through the principal streets of the city. In view of the deep-rooted enmity between the Kurds and the Turkmen . . . and provocative acts by the latter both before and during the festivals, appropriate precautionary measures were taken by us. . . .
>
> At about seven, as the procession got to the Old Bridge on its way to the Qal'ah side (see Map 7), it came upon a demonstration of Turkmen riding in army vehicles. Intervening, I kept the two sides apart. The procession moved on, with myself at its head. On entering Independence Street, I saw a column of about 60 soldiers carrying ropes and marching in the opposite direction. On my orders, the police deflected them into the side street of the Directorate of Education. When the procession, flowing forward, reached the Fourteenth July Coffee-house, a haunt of the Turkmen, shots rang out. Who did the firing could not be determined, but the marchers became excited and a scuffle followed in which at first stones and the sticks of streamers were used, but which quickly led to discharges of firearms by soldiers and the men of the people and of the Resistance. Twenty Turkmen were killed and their bodies dragged about in the streets. Among the dead were Retired Captain 'Ata Khairal-lah, 'Uthmān ach-Chaichī,

owner of the Fourteenth July Coffee-house, and [a daughter and two sons of] Fū'ād 'Uthmān, the head of al-Khāṣsah quarter. The injured numbered 130. In addition, 70 shops, cafes, and casinos were sacked. All this was the doing of the soldiers, the members of the Resistance, and the men of the people. Elements of the Resistance also attacked the Imām Qāsim Police Station, broke into the arsenal and seized the weapons belonging to the Resistance and 18 police rifles. . . . This attack, we have since learned, was carried out upon the initiative of Retired Police Commissioner Nūrī Walī and his group.[14]

MAP 7

Sketch of the City of Kirkūk



The account leaves unanswered a number of questions: Why were the Turkish demonstrators riding in army vehicles? Who led out the rope-carrying soldiers or was behind their clearly provocative manifestation? What kind of group did retired police commissioner, Nūrī Walī, command, and what were his possible motives?

No light can be shed on the first question. As to the rope-carrying soldiers, they may have belonged to the Works' Company and the Military Police Detachment which, according to the chief of security, figured prominently in the happenings on that day and "had played an effective role

in the time of the ex-commander of the Division," the Communist Staff Brigadier Dāūd aj-Janābī.[15] This, if true, would suggest that the guiding thread in this case may have been in the hands of Kurdish Communists. With regard to the retired police commissioner, Nūrī Walī, it would appear from independent evidence given in the Second Martial Court that his group was in some degree made up of his relatives, and engaged in violence in part at least to settle purely personal scores. Its appeal was not to political but to ethnic feelings: an eyewitness, a sergeant in the army, attested that on issuing from the Imām Qāsim police station, Nūrī Walī handed out the arms to a crowd waiting outside which, shortly afterwards, hurriedly set off in the direction of the bridge and the Qal'ah, firing in the air and crying: "The Turkmen have slaughtered all our Kurdish brethren!"[16]

If the version of the chief of police is obscure on certain counts, its description of the outcome clearly suggests that the Turkmen were essentially unarmed. This makes it doubtful that the mysterious shots that crackled near the Fourteenth July Coffee-house came from their side, and raises the question as to whether these shots were a prearranged signal, or a thoughtless initiative, or the act of a third party–a question that cannot be settled.

If the element of deliberateness is not plainly discernible in, at least, the first incidents on July 14, it seems, on the other hand, to have characterized the events of the next two days. On July 15, Kurdish soldiers from the Fourth Brigade, using mortars, shelled the Turkish-owned Aṭlas and 'Alamein Cinemas and some of the Turkish houses in al-Qal'ah from which, they claimed, fire had been aimed at them. But the Kirkūk chief of security wrote to Baghdād subsequently that the firing on the soldiers was a put-up thing, and blamed it on the Youth Union and the Resistance.[17] In another report he maintained that it had come to light that on the fifteenth, Retired Captain aj-Jabbārī of the National Front, Beirūzkhān of the Youth Union, and others, accompanied by certain members of the military police, were "designating to be slain and dragged about every person whom they considered to be hostile to them and whom they happened to meet at the gate of the Divisional Headquarters or the local club," where many Kirkūklis had taken refuge.[18] Later, on 29 July, at a press conference, Qāsim asserted, apparently on the strength of complaints by Turkmen, that "the anarchists proceeded to houses that had been marked on maps beforehand,

brought out their residents, and put them to death."[19] Nothing about this could be traced in the contemporary Kirkūk police accounts. However, in a letter on 27 July, the chief of security, charging the Youth Union with the misdeed, reported that "lately," that is, not during but several days after the disturbance, marks had appeared on a number of houses in the city, which excited fear in the Turkmen and occasioned the flight of about four hundred families to Baghdād.[20] Upon this subject the principal organ of the Communist party remarked a few days afterwards: "It has been said that signs had been put on certain houses with the intention of attacking their residents, whereas now it is known that the Department of Electricity was doing that for its own purposes."[21]

Order was not fully restored in Kirkūk until after the arrival on 17 July of military reinforcements from Baghdād and the disarming of the Kurdish soldiers of the Fourth Brigade. All in all 120 houses, cafes, and stores were gutted or plundered. As to the victims, the chief of security wrote on 20 July that the known dead were 32, but estimated that there were 20 others buried in places that were still being searched.[22] On 2 August, Qāsim put the total at 79,[23] but on 2 December, that is, just after his recovery from bullet wounds inflicted upon him by members of the Ba'th party, he retracted the figure, and said that only 31 were actually killed and that the confusion was due to the fact that "each corpse was photographed many times from various angles."[24] The final official estimate for the injured was 130.

Qāsim reacted sharply to the news of the bloodletting at Kirkūk. "It is within our power," he declared on 19 July, "to crush anyone who confronts the sons of our people with anarchic acts stemming from grudges, rancor, and blind fanaticism." He also called on all soldiers and officers "to obey only orders issued by the high command."[25] When he later saw pictures of the frightfully mangled corpses he was shocked. "Hulagu in his time did not commit such atrocities, nor even the Zionists!" he exclaimed in a meeting with Iraqi journalists on the twenty-ninth. "Can these be the acts of . . . organizations which allege to be democratic?" he asked. But, while passionately denouncing the perpetrators as knaves "without honor or conscience" and "baser than Fascists," he made clear in that meeting, and again in an address to the representatives of unions and vocational organizations on 2 August, that he was not blaming nor had any intention to

call to account any particular party or principle. “Individuals,” he said, “are responsible for these catastrophes and I shall deal with them as individuals. I do not want to persecute organizations.”[26]

Upon the Communist leadership in Baghdād, news of the savagery at Kirkūk came like an ill wind. It had obviously nothing to gain from a senseless slaughter of Turkmen. But it had been for many months under the influence of the paralyzing idea that “the opposing of excess would weaken the revolutionary spirit of the people.”[27] That is why it did nothing to condemn the shady elements that had hooked up with the party and had, back in March at Mosul, indulged, in its name, in bestialities to settle long-standing private grudges or family or ethnic feuds in their own interests. But then it could afford to shut its eyes. It was entering the period of its maximal power. The violence could also be extenuated: there had actually been a revolt. Now, however, it was impossible to cover up for the Kirkūk Communists or pseudo-Communists, although at first the party leadership tried to do just that, by throwing the blame on the “Turanians”[28] and the agents of the imperialists, while at the same time, to appease Qāsim, placing “unrestrictedly” at his disposal “all the forces and capabilities of the party.”[29] But after Qāsim’s shaking of his fist at the “anarchists,”[30] and as the newspapers, hostile to communism, began giving wide play to the atrocities, the Central Committee of the party met, upon urgent summons, in an extraordinary plenary session. Its debate was vehement from the very start. According to ʻAzīz ash-Shaikh, a member of the committee,[31] the demand was voiced at one point for the removal of Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, the general secretary, but ar-Raḍī produced a secret report by the new commander of the Second Division, in which the latter affirmed that the army had put into effect the “Kirkūk Security Plan,” but meeting with resistance, used mortars, killing a number of people; and that, moreover, the leaders of the “popular organizations” had placed themselves at his disposal with a view to the restoring of tranquillity.[32] The Central Committee, having no reason to doubt the authenticity of the report, gave it credence; but, in view of its inaccuracies, to say the least, it would appear that some elements, perhaps Kurdish Communists in the Second Division, were leading not only Baghdād but their own party command astray. It is extremely unlikely that ar-Raḍī would have himself manufactured the report. At any rate, the plenum insisted that the party must take an

unequivocal attitude against “torture, the dragging about of bodies, the plunder of property, and other violations of the law.”[33]

The feeling of the plenum soon found reflection in *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*. In one of its more expressive editorials, that of 2 August 1959, the paper wrote:

> It is laid to us that we believe in violence within the frame of the national movement and in the relations with the other patriotic forces. This is a sheer libel. . . .
>
> In well-known articles published a long time ago we stressed that “the method is the touch-stone.” But it seems that there is a deliberate intent to confuse this correct and firm attitude . . . with the impetuosities of some simple nonparty masses. . . .
>
> We utterly condemn any transgression against innocent people . . . or the harming or torture even of traitors. . . . We condemn these methods on principle. . .,[34]

The apologia of the plenum was published on 3 August in summary form, and on the twenty-third in full. It referred to the “practical impossibility” under the monarchy of educating the masses and habituating them to organized political work; to the difficulty of taming their energies, once liberated; to a party “mistakenly embarrassed” and hesitant to rebuke them for fear of abating their enthusiasm; to the continuation of clandestineness in organization despite the open character of the party’s political activity–which, as cells greatly multiplied, hindered the command from closely supervising the rank and file and facilitated the “misapplication” of the party’s policy by “some of the less experienced party organizations,” and the perpetration of “excesses” by nonparty elements “pretending to be Communists.” The plenum also admitted that the party was in the wrong in not standing firmly against such occurrences at the time, and called for stern disciplinary measures against every party member who could be shown to have been involved in culpable behavior.[35]

But the owl of Minerva began its flight too late.

47

THE EBB

The Communists had attained and passed the apogee of their power before the outbreak at Kirkūk. When in May of 1959 they meekly abandoned their bid for a share in the government, the flow of people toward them ceased. However, it was only after Kirkūk that there began a real ebbing away of support from them.

For this process there were causes other than the grave moral damage inflicted upon the party by the madness at Kirkūk.

One important factor was the change in the mood of the country. A people cannot for long live on its nerves. After the convulsions of the first year of the revolution, Iraqis began thirsting for repose. This did not augur well for the Communists, who developed and ripened best in tempestuous times.

Another factor, very much at work in the initial abrupt flight from certain of the mass unions and organizations, was the nature of many of the individuals that the party had swept along with it in its great surge forward: men of unstable and ephemeral inclinations and now, as the tide turned, the first to decry what they had before exalted; or men of more durable opinions but not ready to struggle, or sacrifice, or brave repression. In the changed climate, the responses to basic party organizers, trying to command attention, were often: “We are occupied!” or “We have families!” or “We can live with both sides!” or some such thing.[1]

Still another contributory factor was the widening gulf between Qāsim and the Communists. Many Iraqis had lined up behind the party, not on account of what it itself stood for, but by virtue of its partnership with Qāsim. As its bonds with him loosened and conflict set in, they quickly drew off.

The blows that Qāsim dealt to the party also had their effect. In the period from July 19 to August 12, 1959, he arrested “hundreds” of rank-and-file Communists and traveling companions; put the People’s Resistance Force “in abeyance”; closed down the branches of the Democratic Youth Federation in provincial towns; threatened “penalties” to persons “arrogating to themselves” the appellation of “Committees for the Defence of the Republic”; sealed the offices of the General Federation of Trade Unions; and demobilized no fewer than 1,700 reservists, including the entire Communist-influenced Thirteenth Reserve Officer Class.[2] Although on 13 August–concomitantly with a declaration by him to the effect that he “shall not permit the defeat of the democratic forces in this land”[3]–Qāsim eased the pressure on the Communists in the cities, he not long afterwards began acting against them in the countryside. Most hurtful was his abrogation on September 6 of Law No. 78 of 9 May 1959, which had in effect vested in the predominantly Communist Founding Committee of the General Federation of Peasants’ Associations the power to license local units. Under the new Law No. 139 of 1959, this responsibility devolved upon the governors of provinces.[4] All these measures undoubtedly played a causative role in the movement of people away from the Communists.

But one must guard against exaggerating the decline in the party’s support at this juncture. Wide masses were still hospitable to its ideas. Besides, the ebb affected more the auxiliary organizations of the party than the party itself. To some extent this was due to the greater tenacity of party members. To a considerable degree, however, it is explicable by the fact that the brunt of Qāsim’s attacks fell upon the auxiliary organizations, that is, the outposts of the party rather than on its inner core. It is not only that the outposts were more visible, but Qāsim was also acting advisedly: pursuing as ever his policy of balance, he sought not the destruction of the Communists but merely their enfeeblement. It is in this light that must be apprehended his just-quoted statement of 13 August.

The ebb affected also different auxiliary organizations differently. It was not simply a question of which ones Qāsim singled out as targets for his attack. Other elements were at work. Thus the associations organized territorially, such as the Democratic Youth Federation, could not as easily be held together as those organized occupationally, such as the Oil Workers’

Union. Again, the organizations whose members were directly dependent on the government for their livelihood, such as the Construction Workers' Union, proved–except where simultaneously other influences had play–the least resistant to its pressure. Further, the organizations in which the Communists had deep historical roots, such as the Federation of Students or the Railway Workers' Union, remained firm in their attachment to the party. By contrast, the party lost no little of its hold over the associations of peasants, among whom it had traditionally been weak. A higher degree of political consciousness also mattered, as in the case of the Union of Teachers, which embraced the poorest of the intelligentsia and, therefore, the segment of this class most dependent on the state for its means of living–and yet, at the same time, many of the most steadfast supporters of the party. But here, too, the party was gathering in the harvest of long, unremitting effort.

Many of these things the hardened Communist organizers sensed only intuitively, or in a general way, or more clearly at a later point. That their party was experiencing a decline did not, of course, escape them but they had no means of assessing its precise extent. For one thing, the period of the ebb–July-October 1959–coincided, insofar as the students and teachers were concerned, with the period of the summer vacation. For another, it was the period of the party's "orderly retreat,"[5] so that there was scarcely any opportunity to test in action the strength of old or recently formed loyalties.[6]

But there were some signs. Already in the latter half of July, the anti-Communist paper *Al-Fajr-uj-Jadīd* (The New Dawn), was reportedly outselling the party's organ, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b.*[7] Moreover, on 28 August the nationalists won control of the Lawyers' Association. Their candidate, 'Abd-ur-Razzāq Shabīb, drew 456 votes, the Communist 'Azīz Sharīf 267, and the National Democrat Ḥasan Zakariyyah 165. But the elections in this instance were not without their peculiarity: many Communist or Communist-inclined lawyers, having taken government jobs in the time of the flood-tide, were excluded, on a ruling by Iraq's highest tribunal, from membership of the association on the ground that they were no longer practicing at the bar.[8] Apart from a contest on 7 September for the Association of Journalists which, in view of the still unshaken hold of the Communists on the press, issued in the election as president of Muḥammad Mahdī-aj-Jawāhirī, a poet and the editor of the party-lining *Al-Ayyām*, the

Communists had no other concrete indices by which they could measure their losses, for a month later the Ba‘thī attempt on Qāsim’s life abruptly interrupted the ebb in the party’s fortunes.

Before turning to the new chapter in the history of the Communists that now opened, it is necessary to consider briefly one of the most striking features of the period of the ebb: the party’s public recantation of August of 1959.

48

THE “SELF-FLAGELLATION”

In the thick of its crisis, and while suffering blow upon blow, the party unexpectedly took, in the words of a subsequent secret Communist resolution,[1] the road of “flagellating itself” before the whole country.

On the morning of 3 August, *lttiḥād-Ush-Sha‘b* appeared with what purported to be the gist of a “detailed report” in the course of preparation by a “special committee,” which was to incorporate the “thoughts and decisions” of a plenum that the Central Committee was said to have held in mid-July. The report was eventually published on 23 August.[2]

As already noted, the report condemned the “excesses” at Kirkūk and elsewhere, but over and above that, it found fault in nearly every important aspect of party life and behavior. It pointed to the “contradiction” between the growth of the party in numbers and its falling off in quality; to the decreasing capacity of the party organizations to grasp and remain faithful to the ideas and policy of the party, and the weakening of their “guiding role” among the masses; to the development of a “bureaucratic style” at the different party levels, and the taking of decisions of a weighty character either “individually” or after consulting only “some comrades of the Politbureau,” in violation of “the rights of the Central Committee” and “the principle of collective leadership.” To these organizational failures the report linked causally the failures in policy. Seized by “dizziness of victory,” the party had, the report maintained, overrated itself; belittled the role and possibilities of the government and “the other patriotic forces” in “the struggle for the preservation of the Republic”; set too low a value upon the importance of collaborating with the National Democrats and Kurdish Democrats in the defense of the “democratic rights” won “by the people”; made a bid for a share in the responsibility of power-and of this more presently-without taking cognizance of the realities of the situation; adopted

in regard to the decision of the National Democrats to suspend their activities so “crude” and “sectarian” an approach, and launched the Front of National Union in such a structural form and so inopportunely, as to deepen the differences with the regime and blight the prospects of cooperation between “all the patriotic forces.” The report added, however, that the call to constitute the Front was indispensable, that in the face of the self-freezing of the National Democratic party, the Communists had to open up an ideological and political activity “in defense of the democratic course of the Republic,” that, furthermore, the National Democrats took up a “severe attitude” toward “every suggestion” to combine efforts, and that “the unity of the patriotic forces” did not depend “solely” upon the policy of the Communists. But these and other extenuating formulations did not detract from the force of the party’s self-censure.

It is necessary at this point to indicate that the brief account of the views of the plenum published on 3 August was, strictly speaking, not a resume of the full report published on the twenty-third. Substantially the same ideas were, it is true, expressed in the one as in the other, but with a certain difference in language and, here and there, in tone and shadings. Moreover, there was one important variation: the attitude of the plenum toward the party’s April bid for a place in the government was, to a noticeable degree, differently portrayed in the two versions. “In view of the need for a more solid alliance with the ruling power and the patriotic forces on the official level and for the strengthening of the authority of the government and of its democratic course . . . ,” read the version of 3 August,

> the party’s demand for participation in the responsibility of power was, in its essence, correct . . . but the failure to calculate adequately the consequences, the erroneous way in which the slogan was imparted to the masses and its spread to the demonstration of May 1, to official gatherings, and among members of the army . . . led to the impairment of the party’s relations with the national government.

On the other hand, the version of 23 August, while bringing out that the plenum had laid emphasis upon the sharing of “the political representatives of all the patriotic classes” in a coalition government as “the mode of power

best suited to the period of the national democratic revolution," admitted in the same breath that

> our bid proved in practice to be a mistake, having been made without regard to the concrete situation, the correlation of forces in the country, and the dependence of the revolution in its development upon the Arab and international posture of affairs.

The different portrayal gives an inkling of the tensions that pervaded the plenum and its "special committee." The report, in fact, had not been adopted without strong opposition from the more militant members of the Central Committee, headed by party Secretary Ḥusain ar-Raḍī. There are echoes in subsequent internal party literature of the hot debate they had with the other wing, led by ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah, who continues to this day to be identified with the "right" of the party. In the form it appeared later, the contention of the "right" was that "some comrades spoiled everything by showing no tact in their talks with Qāsim and indeed by provoking him"; that the participation of the party in the government could have been arranged with Qāsim privately, and that it was "rash" and "foolhardy" to take the issue to the streets; that the intelligent thing, to use a folkloric saying, was not "to kill the watcher of the vine" but "to eat the grapes"; that "instead of striving steadily and calmly to strengthen the positions already won . . . and gradually and quietly going on to achieve small, even if very small, but continuous triumphs," the party "raised a great deal of noise" in every sphere, even in the army, made "unjustifiable manifestations, such as the appearance of Comrade ʻAmmār [one of the party sobriquets of Ḥusain ar-Raḍī] in military camps and at military celebrations," reiterated unnecessarily such phrases as "we are the strongest party in the land" or "the widest masses are on our side," and used in its daily political work such outright "leftist" methods as "to create not only among many people but also inside our own party the illusion that we aim at a rapid seizure of power."[3] In counterarguing, the "left" maintained that the "utmost" to which the command of the party had aspired in raising the slogan for a share in the government was the participation of "some prominent Communists" in a cabinet that was little better than a "dummy" in the hands of Qāsim, and

that the slogan consisted of two parts, the first of which read: “Long Live the Leader ‘Abd-ul-Karīm.” Where in this manner of action lay the element of “adventurism,” the “left” wondered. The “right” of the party, it added, fancied that things could be fixed by “tact” and “behind the scenes,” and explained “political and social developments of great weight” in terms of “the temper and caprice of Qāsim” and the use or nonuse upon him of “the magic of diplomacy.” Contrary to the view of the “right,” Qāsim was not “one of kindred officers with no ties of private property and no integrated political ideology.” The “mentality” with which he conducted the policy of the country, “his fears from the first moment of the spread of the influence of the Communist party and the eruption of the working class and the peasant masses,” his “forbearance” with the political reaction and his retainment of the old state machine, even as the party was “steering a course of solidest alliance with him . . . and playing the foremost role in creating illusions about his person”– all this indubitably showed that he was “from the very beginning a conscious representative of the national bourgeoisie.” His “painstaking”’ preservation of the records of the monarchy on the activities of the party, and his “exertion of every effort” to keep the Communists from filling any position in the Ministry of Interior or in the leadership of the police or the local administration, told more than enough about what he had really in view for the party.[4]

These are all verbalizations of a later date, but they are reflective of the mood of the two sides at the plenum of mid-1959. Of course, at the plenum the “right,” which still had faith in Qāsim’s “good intentions” and argued that the Communists’ best hopes lay in the pledged revival of an unshackled party life, got the upper hand. A majority pronounced itself emphatically in favor of cooperating with Qāsim. An out-and-out fight against his regime was too grim an alternative to envisage. Barring any half-way approach, the plenum insisted on the need to avoid saying or doing anything that could strain the party’s relations with him. With that end in view, it took measures to “freeze” Communist activity in the army.[5] It also advised the rank and file that the party was entering a phase of “orderly retreat.”[6] Simultaneously, the authority of Ḥusain ar-Raḍī was diluted by the substitution for the one-man Secretariat of a Secretariat of four. Ar-Raḍī became first secretary. Bahā’u-d-Dīn Nūrī, who had led the party from 1949 to 1953, Hādī Hāshim al-A‘ḍhamī, a Sunnī Arab from al-A‘ḍhamiyyah and a professional

Communist from his student days, and Muḥammad Ḥusain Abu-l-‘Īss, an Arab Shī‘ī lawyer from al-Kāḍhimiyyah (consult Table 42-6) were appointed as his assistants. They all belonged to the “right” wing of the Politbureau.[7]

The party’s “self-flagellation” and the triumph of the “right” trend at the highest level marked the beginning of a psychological divorce between a widening segment of hardened rank-and-file and middle echelon Communists and the party command-or, more accurately, a majority of it–a divorce which with time was to increase in acuteness, and which sprang from a feeling in the lower levels that the party had unnecessarily humbled itself, and that far from averting thereby further blows from the side of the government, it was only inviting them and adding, at the same time, grist to the mill of the reaction.[8]

With the “other patriotic parties”– the National Democrats and the Kurdish Democrats–the spirit of contrition did not help the Communists a whit, at least immediately. But it did find favor in the eyes of Qāsim and disposed him, for the time being, to smooth down his pressure upon the party. Its prostration before him must have titillated his sense of his own importance.

What about the reaction of the public? There is, of course, not one public in Iraq but several, each responsive to dissimilar influences. What of the public that edged toward the Communists? Could it have seen in the report of the plenum something other than meekness? Could it perhaps have viewed it as a sign of political vitality or even an act of moral courage? These are aspects that the report also presents to the mind, but they were not the aspects that that segment of the public perceived. In the report it only read that the party was beating a full retreat, and no public in the country admires a force in retreat or cares to hang on to it.

49

THE RECOVERY

In the autumn of 1959 a wave of revival swept the party. Its support, which had been narrowing, widened. Its banners and placards reappeared. Its organizers perked up. Its masses were alive again.

This new energy did not arise from any initiative on the part of the Communists, but from a sudden attempt by their chief opponents to overturn the political situation.

At about 7:30 in the evening of 7 October, Baghdād Radio interrupted its program and announced that an hour earlier, while Qāsim was driving along ar-Rashīd Street, a "sinful hand" fired at his car and wounded him "very slightly" in the shoulder and arm.

The "sinful hand" was that of the Ba'th party. From its standpoint and in its situation, the killing of Qāsim meant the cutting of the Gordian knot. It lacked the resources for any other kind of conclusive action against him.

The idea had been on the mind of its leaders since before the Mosul revolt,[1] and after that ill-starred venture it became their sole preoccupation. From mid-April on, they fell to preparing in earnest the means by which they hoped to succeed. Weapons, including machine guns, were purchased from "smugglers and some nationalist and allied elements and from friends." Volunteers were trained in "a remote place inside the desert which stretches beyond Musayyib." The Arab Nationalist Movement was contacted and informed of the plan. So was Ṣiddīq Shanshal of the old Independence party, who pledged to back the enterprise with money. By early June, everything was ready but, instead of striking, the Ba'thists held their hand. They suddenly realized that by dooming Qāsim now they would as surely be dooming themselves: they would be enabling the Communists, who were still at a high point of their influence, to attain at a single stride their ultimate end. More than that, Qāsim had given "certain political

circles” to understand that he would soon be leveling blows at the Communists. The plan was accordingly shelved, and was not revived until after Qāsim’s statement of 13 August, in which he made clear that he would not allow the undoing of “the democratic forces.”[2] The execution on 20 September of Staff Brigadier Nāḍhim aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī, Colonel Rif‘at al-Ḥājj Sirrī, and eleven other officers for their role in the Mosul revolt–this, to borrow from Talleyrand, was worse than a judicial slaying, it was a political blunder–and the wave of anti-Qāsim demonstrations that the execution set off in the nationalist districts, steeled the Ba‘th party in its purpose. By this time other elements had been drawn into the plot. Through Staff Major Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ‘Ammāsh, a Ba‘thī, a number of Free Officers signified their preparedness to keep the Communists in check and place themselves at the helm in the eventuality of Qāsim’s death. Staff Lieutenant General Najīb ar-Rubai‘ī, the president of the Sovereignty Council, who was also won over, undertook, if the thing was done, to don his military uniform and help in gaining mastery of the situation. The attempt was set for 3 October. Qāsim’s car was to be fired on with machine guns at Ra‘s-ul-Qaryah, where ar-Rashīd Street is at its narrowest, and the traffic and press of people very heavy, and where alleys abounded, affording the would-be assailants easy escape. But Qāsim took that day a different route from his house in ‘Alwiyyah to his office at the Ministry of Defence. The action had to be postponed more than once, and could only be effected on the seventh.[3]

Nothing fell out as the Ba‘thists had hoped. Qāsim was only wounded, but more badly than Baghdād Radio had at first intimated. The Free Officer-conspirators wavered and pulled different ways. The chief of staff, Aḥmad Ṣāliḥ al‘Abdī, who refused to have anything to do with them, proved a formidable obstacle. His prudence may not have been unconnected with a happening that he revealed only in 1963. In that crucial hour “scores of Communist officers,” he said, had to all practical intents possessed themselves of the Ministry of Defence.[4] The popular demonstrations that broke out within minutes of the shooting had also some effect. Members of the Central Committee of the Communist party went into the streets to calm the crowds, and persuade them to disperse and abide by the curfew ordered by al-‘Abdī.[5] Moreover, according to an internal Communist circular,

> despite the . . . freezing of our organization in the army . . . and the absence of clear and definite instructions from the party, and although the incident at Ra‘s-ul-Qaryah took the party utterly by surprise, the masses of the soldiers expelled, on their own initiative, suspected and reactionary officers and spontaneously gained mastery over the military camps.[6]

This, if true, may have been the most decisive factor in the rapid crumbling of the plot.

One of the byproducts of the attempt upon Qāsim’s life was the working out by the Communist leadership of an “emergency plan” that was propagated throughout the party, and provided an answer to the question: “What should you do, Comrade, if you hear on the radio a putschist communique?”[7] Practical guidelines were prepared for both civilian and military cells, which were not to wait for orders “from above” but to move “promptly” into action.

A member of the Military Section of the party gave on 20 February 1963 the following account of the origin and substance of the plan:

> After the attempt to assassinate Qāsim, the Communist party, having examined the situation, came to the view that the apparatus of Qāsim was weak and could not keep a sharp eye upon enemies. The Politbureau, therefore, gave by word of mouth an order to its Military Section to take stock of its potential and address itself to the question: “What can we do in the event of a conspiracy against the regime?” Out of the close and patient study that ensued, evolved a plan which was called “The Emergency Plan” and which in essence ran as follows:
>
> Should Qāsim be wounded, all forces would hold themselves in readiness to take instructions from him and readiness means the arrest of some of the “reactionary” officers and soldiers and the cheering of Qāsim with the intent of rallying all supporters, precaution being taken not to use the name of the Communist party or any slogans which could upset the elements backing Qāsim but not the Communists.
>
> Should Qāsim be killed, however, the party would consider that the regime had come to an end and would repose no confidence even in

al-‘Abdī [the chief of staff and military governor general]. In that eventuality, members must be prepared to rush the arsenals and arrest and even kill any one offering resistance. . . .

There has been an intention to extend the plan and appoint a Communist command inside every regiment and sector but arrangements to this effect have not as yet been completed.[8]

The whole plan rested on the basic premise that the issue would be decided in Baghdād and “especially in the military camps,” and that the “masses” would play only “a supporting role.”[9]

It is clear that the initiative and, therefore, the advantages of surprise were left entirely to the opponents of the party. Moreover, the fighting weight of the Military Section was probably overestimated. That the moral and physical forces of the party could be held in a state of readiness indefinitely was also an assumption that events would prove to have been gratuitous.

Another effect of the attempt upon Qāsim’s life was the effacement from public consciousness of the outrage at Kirkūk. With this came a shift of mood toward the party and a renewal in its strength. These changes found a vivid mirroring in various elections held in the winter of 1959-1960. Thus on 26 November, 118 Communist and only 4 National Democratic and 32 nationalist college candidates, and 194 Communist and 73 nationalist preparatory school candidates succeeded in elections for the Students’ Federation, in which 13,000 college students and 50,000 preparatory school students participated.[10] Again, on 11 December, the Communists and their traveling companions won 381 out of the 560 votes cast in the elections for the Association of Economists.[11] Further, on 11 February the General Federation of Trade Unions, which had regained its legal status on 11 November,[12] elected a Central Council of ten, all Communists.[13] Finally, on 13 February the Communist-led United Vocational Front got 453 out of a total of 500 seats on the General Council of the Iraqi Teachers’ Union in elections in which more than 20,000 teachers took part.[14]

But the party did not bang drums or crash cymbals. Its ambition now was merely to achieve “small, even if very small but continuous triumphs,” and as quietly as possible. It also went out of its way to put its moderate face forward. Toward Qāsim its policy became unreservedly one of

accommodation, toward the National Democrats and Kurdish Democrats, one of closing of ranks. It even extended its hand to “loyal nationalists” who, it said, had “the right to disseminate their ideas and compete with the other patriotic forces peacefully and with the political means sanctioned by the law,” but appealed to them to “isolate themselves” from the “traitorous Nationalist Front” that had plotted against Qāsim.[15] Moderateness was also the keynote of the mammoth procession which the party organized on December 4 in honor of Qāsim’s discharge from the hospital: its followers marched under the slogans: “Hand in Hand with the National Government for the Preservation of Order!” “More Grain for Your People, Brave Peasants!” “Produce More, O Valiant Workers!” “Long Live the Solidarity of the People, the Army, and the Government under the Leadership of ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim!”[16] When the National Democrats organized a rival demonstration of peasants on December 18, the party took guard not to interfere, but simply questioned in mild terms whether this “display of special forces” would help “the unity of the peasants and of the national ranks.”[17]

However, the resurgence of the Communists, and perhaps what was said to have happened on October 7-the occupation by Communist officers of the Ministry of Defence and the seizure by soldiers of military camps– disposed Qāsim now to move against the party in a more serious manner.

50

THE BOGUS PARTY

On January 1, 1960, in seeming fulfillment of the promise given by him on the first anniversary of the Revolution, Qāsim passed the Law of Associations, which formally permitted the resumption of party life in Iraq.[1]

On the ninth, Zakī Khairī, a member of the Politbureau, forwarded on behalf of fifteen "founding members"[2] the notice, required by the new law, advising the minister of interior of

> our desire to form a political party, bearing the name of the Iraqi Communist Party, . . . and aiming at the reinforcement of the independence and national unity of the country, the consolidation of the Republican regime, the furtherance of democratic government, and the accomplishment of these aims by peaceful democratic means and conformably to the provisions of the constitution and the valid laws.[3]

The notice was accompanied by the National Charter and the Internal Rules of the Party. The National Charter–an appellation attaching to the party program since the days of Fahd–bore, as everything else emanating from the party in this period, the imprint of studied restraint. It explicitly excluded "socialist aims" from its immediate range of vision; underscored the need "in the current historical stage" to "respect private property" and to "encourage" and "guide" private national capital; and represented the cooperation of "all the patriotic political forces" in a United National Front as an "historical necessity."[4] For the workers it demanded only "a proper standard of living," the reinforcement of trade union rights, and more solid security against unemployment, disease, and old age,[5] and for every peasant a complete emancipation from "the injustices of feudalism" and "a share of

arable land" through the reclamation of state-owned lands, and the lowering of the maximum limit of agricultural ownership in respect to lands of high productivity.[6] Insofar as the oil companies were concerned, it even called for nothing more than the increase of Iraq's share from the oil profits, the restriction of the companies' concessions "to the limits of the presently exploited wells," and the determining of payments to Iraq on the basis of prices in the world market and "not on the basis of prices fixed by the major oil monopolies in the Mediterranean Sea."[7] Inasmuch as the belief was widespread in the higher levels, no less than in the ranks, that in any freely conducted national election the party would win a plurality if not a majority, the Charter was bound to give special accent to the importance of enabling the people to assert their will, and the creation for this purpose of authentic democratic institutions, including a properly elected National Assembly.[8]

Such, in the view of the Charter, were the "basic tasks" of the day. They were essentially of a "democratic-liberational" character. Carrying them out would be, it declared, in the interest of "all the national classes."[9]

On the whole, Marxist categories were sparingly used, but the party did profess that, in defining its aims, it had been guided by the "principles of scientific socialism."[10] Moreover, its Internal Rules committed it expressly to Marxism-Leninism,[11] but even here only in a general way and more as a matter of form.

On the same day that the party sent its notice to the minister of interior, another notice was submitted by Dāūd aṣ-Ṣāyegh,[12] on behalf of a manifestly imaginary Communist party. Aṣ-Ṣāyegh, it will be remembered, had been won over to communism by Fahd in 1941, but broke with him three years later, and from 1944 to 1947 led the factional League of Iraqi Communists to which had belonged, among others, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Salīm al-Fakhrī, Qāsim's director of broadcasting in 1959, and Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ghaḍbān Ḥardān as-Sa'd, Qāsim's military secretary in 1959 and his inspector of the army in I960.[13] Qāsim himself may have at some point come into contact with the League or some of its members but for this there is no conclusive evidence. At any rate, in 1956, after duly criticizing his past, aṣ-Ṣāyegh rejoined the main movement and at the Second Party Conference, held in September of that year, was elevated to candidate membership of the Central Committee.[14] However, in

1957, having, according to the party, “refused to go underground,”[15] he was ousted from the committee[16] and ceased to attend party meetings altogether.

The filing of aṣ-Ṣāyegh’s notice did not take the Communists by surprise. Talk had been rife for some time in Baghdād of Qāsim’s intention to float through aṣ-Ṣāyegh a rival Communist party.[17] For this there were signs that the Communists could read as fluently as any one else. Qāsim not only authorized aṣ-Ṣāyegh to start on November 21, 1959, a new newspaper, *Al-Mabda’*, but as a way of conferring his blessing, he invited him to his hospital quarters and favored him with an exclusive interview on matters of moment. By December 4, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* had already put two and two together and reached the appropriate inference. “One party for the working class in each country–that is the principle which was upheld by Lenin against . . . all kinds of opportunism,” it declared.[18]

All the same, the Communists could not now hide their fury at this barefaced attempt “from outside the party” to appropriate its name and “steal its history,” or their fierce satisfaction when on 13 January six of the ten “founder signatories” of aṣ-Ṣāyegh’s application openly withdrew their support.[19]

Aṣ-Ṣāyegh was stung by this desertion to bitter and repeated attacks upon the party, but these were interspersed in the last week of January with insistent appeals for unifying the two applications.[20] Anxious, as it was, to go legal, so to say, the party decided to find out what he or, more precisely, Qāsim was up to. On 1 February and again on the third, a party delegation headed by Zakī Khairī met with aṣ-Ṣāyegh, who had at length succeeded in scraping together a new list of “founding members.” Aṣ-Ṣāyegh set forth a number of proposals, some of which he had had previously occasion to air. He requested, first of all, the purge or “freezing” of Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah, and Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī, the three leading members of the Politbureau, whom he charged with “direct responsibility” for the party’s “left deviations.” This step, he said, should be made public by formal announcement. He also insisted on the setting up of a joint founding committee on which both sides would be equally represented. Such was Qāsim’s price for coming to terms with the bona fide Communists, but it was too high. The party’s delegation could not accept it. The proposals, it maintained, conflicted with two “basic” principles of the party–its unity and its “independence in the choice of its leaders.” Over and above that, “the

three comrades" to whom aṣ-Ṣāyegh had referred enjoyed "the full confidence of the party and its Central Committee." In a counterproposal, the party's delegation offered to form a "special committee" to look into the "opinions and problems" of aṣ-Ṣāyegh's group, if it consented to withdraw its application from the Ministry of Interior.[21]

Aṣ-Ṣāyegh turned down the counterproposal, but eight of the new "founding members" who may, to begin with, have joined him on the party's instructions, now abandoned him with a bang, unreservedly accepting the party's point of view,[22] and thus, strictly speaking, depriving his group once again of its legal status.[23] But this made no difference with the government which, five days later, that is, on 9 February, simultaneously with its licensing of the National Democrats and Kurdish Democrats, confirmed aṣ-Ṣāyegh as the leader, for every legal intent, of "the Communist party in its open form." At the last minute it had gotten him all the "founding members" he needed. Commented *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b:* "If Dāūd aṣ-Ṣāyegh imagines that by a flourish of ideological phrases, a paper with signatures, a stamp, a desk, and a few chairs and a handful of hangers-on, he can become a leader . . . , he is mistaken."[24] But in a more serious note, the paper warned that "attempts to hinder the Iraqi working class from exercising its right to organize itself politically . . . are not only prejudicial to democratic life . . . but also harmful to the preservation of the Republic."[25]

Earlier, on 6 February, the minister of interior had written to the party that he had several objections against its application. The party met them all promptly and without argument. Among other things, it deleted upon his request the term "revolutionary" from its program and inner rules, and explained for his benefit that it did not look upon "Marxism-Leninism" as a "prescription" to be blindly followed, but allowed for "the needs of the society, its conditions, and its national and local characteristics."[26]

To overcome one further obstacle which had now become foreseeable, it wrote to the minister on the fourteenth that it had decided to change its name to the *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* party or the Party of the People's Union, "in view of your approval of another application bearing the name of the Communist party–a fact that may lead to some legal confusion."[27] To the public it announced that the number of citizens that had written "from all

over the country" to the government in support of its application had reached by the fifteenth of the month 183,000.[28]

However, on 22 February–six days after the dropping from the cabinet of Ibrahīm Kubbah, the Marxist minister of agrarian reform[29]–the minister of interior refused to alter the party's name and informed its leaders that their application had been rejected essentially on the ground that "the aims and purposes envisaged in your program and inner rules are more or less identical with those of the already licensed Iraqi Communist party," and that the Law of Associations[30] "does not permit the founding of two political parties with nearly the same objectives."[31]

Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, the party's first secretary, reacted defiantly. "We do not need a license to exist," he said, "our party has been in existence for a quarter of a century!"[32] But the refusal to legalize the party came as a bitter blow to the leaders of its dominant right wing. Their belief in the "good intentions" of Qāsim, who had not even bothered to answer an appeal addressed to him personally,[33] was rudely shattered. Support from Radio Moscow[34] and a letter of solidarity from the Syrian Communist party[35] were not much of a consolation. The party found itself politically in a dead-end alley. Anything but a Communist alternative was worse than Qāsim's regime, but a Communist alternative was now out of the question. The party simply had to continue to bolster him up and bear with good or bad grace whatever he chose to inflict upon it. Zakī Khairī, member of the Politbureau, put it very plainly: "To deny [the oldest and largest of the political parties in Iraq] legal recognition is a bad omen for democracy. . . . Nevertheless we will not [oppose] the existing national regime, rather we shall defend it to the last, while criticizing every negative aspect of its policies."[36]

As for aṣ-Ṣāyegh's group, it was unable, three months after its licensing, to muster a national congress, as required by the Law of Associations. "In a big, nearly empty office, in a big, nearly empty building," wrote *The New York Times* on May 1, aṣ-Ṣāyegh "sits waiting these days for 'comrades' to join him."[37] On May 7 the Communists, who had not yet given up hope of making use of his license, offered through Bahā'-ud-Dīn Nūrī, a member of their secretariat, to lend him, "pending the solution of all differences," "some comrades" so that he could hold his congress.[38] But on May 10 the ministry of interior came to his assistance, granting him, in view of the

“unusual conditions” surrounding his group, a delay of six months.[39] A few days later, much to the astonishment of the rank and file of the party, the Communist leaders signified their willingness to accept all the proposals that aṣ-Ṣāyegh had put forward in the February meetings,[40] but this no longer suited Qāsim. Eventually–in November–aṣ-Ṣāyegh’s group succeeded by some means or other in holding its congress.[41] After that it sank into insignificance. Qāsim thought no more of it. It had served its purpose.

51

FROM PILLAR TO POST

After the winter of 1959-1960, the Communist party fell on hard times. The next three years were for it years of unrelieved decline. Its influence waned. Its membership shrank perceptibly. Its subsidiary mass organizations were by and large broken up. The current that had been running in its favor washed over into hostile nationalist channels.

For this new reversal in the fortunes of the Communists there is, of course, no single explanation. Nonetheless, the hand of the government could be discerned in nearly every step of their decline.

Qāsim had from his hospital days or, more precisely, from about November of 1959, been quietly preparing to take the wind out of their sails. His refusal to grant them a license was one step in a campaign whose main lines had been already determined. But he may have been spurred to more serious action against them by the incidents that attended the week-long official visit to Iraq in April 1960 of Anastas I. Miko-yan. In the words of Hāshim Jawād, his foreign minister, “that was the last straw!”[1]

The immense crowds that the party mobilized to greet the Soviet first deputy premier on his arrival in Baghdād on the eighth went into such a delirium of enthusiasm that at many points the car conveying him and Qāsim from the airport could scarcely proceed at all, and took more than one hour to reach az-Zuhūr palace,, which was normally less than ten minutes away. Qāsim was very upset, the more so as the support of the populace for him had been subsiding: a year before, whenever he drove through the streets hundreds cheered him, but for some time now few people even turned to look.[2] The episode, it would appear, so rankled in his mind that when on 9 or 10 April, at a meeting in which Jawād and Gregory Zaitzev, the Soviet ambassador, were also present, Mikoyan complained of the rough time that for some months the Communists of Mosul had been

having at the hand of the local authorities, Qāsim exploded. “I do not permit any interference in the internal affairs of my country!” he said heatedly. Mikoyan became instantly apologetic. “I am not interfering, I am appealing to you!” he protested. After that, as soon as he could, he turned the conversation to a more agreeable subject. He spoke of economic aid. “We want to help you!” he affirmed, “Just tell us what you need!” “Whatever we should need, we would pay for!” Qāsim answered sullenly.[3]

When a few days later, on 12 April, Mikoyan went to visit the railway workshops at Schalchiyyah, strict instructions preceded him enjoining all hands “to attend to their duties” during his presence at the installations. “But to our great distress,” wrote afterwards the director general of railways, “our orders were ignored and all the laborers left their work and thronged around the guest. . . . Was this behavior intended to convey to him that they are Communists?” “It was shocking,” he added, “to see one of the workmen fall on his knees and kiss the hand of the guest.”[4]

Subsequently *Pravda* would complain of the “excessive activity of the police” and of the rough handling of crowds friendly to Mikoyan.[5] But already by 10 April, it had become obvious to foreign journalists that the restraint in the official welcome accorded to the Soviet visitor had “mounted to what appeared to be a ’semi-freeze.’”[6]

It was perhaps no accident that on 17 April, the day after Mikoyan left Iraq, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, the party’s principal organ, was prohibited in Dīwāniyyah.[7] This proved to be the first in a series of measures that ended in the suppression of the whole licensed Communist press. If with Mr. Mikoyan Qāsim had been impulsive and forthright, now, as was more his wont, he did not move precipitately nor straight to his goal but, acting through his subordinates rather than directly, proceeded step by step and by tortuous ways. Thus on 18 May, the ban on *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* was lifted in Dīwāniyyah but imposed in Samāwah.[8] On June 2 it was reimposed in Dīwāniyyah and extended to all the seven provinces of southern Iraq,[9] but on July 28 it was lifted in three of these provinces–Baṣrah, Nāṣiriyyah, and Kūt[10]–only to be reimposed on August 30, and extended to the central provinces except for Greater Baghdād.[11] *“Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b,”* complained the Communists at this point, “has become again a ‘criminal evidence’ as in the days of the old regime.”[12] The fate of the paper was, in a legal sense, sealed on October 1, when a martial court suspended it for ten months.[13]

Qāsim feigned surprise at this conclusion,[14] but although a friend of the party pleaded with him personally that *"Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* has more than sixty editors and many workmen and cost its owner over 80,000 dīnārs,"[15] he never permitted it to reappear. Similar measures were applied to other Communist papers. On 22 June *Ṣawt-uṭ-Ṭalī'ah*, the party's mouthpiece in Baṣrah, and *Ṣawt-ul-Furāt*, its mouthpiece in the mid-Euphrates, were closed down.[16] On 7 November came the turn of *Ṣawt-ush-Sha'b*, the successor of *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha' b*,[17] on 10 November of *Ittiḥād-ul-Umāl*, the organ of the General Federation of Trade Unions, and of *Al-Ḥaḍārah* and *Ath-Thabāt*, two Communist weeklies-turned-dailies;[18] and on 28 December of *Al-Insāniyyah*, a bi-weekly.[19] Only the Communist-inclined *Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār* survived to the end of the Qāsim regime, but it had by 1961 become pretty spineless. Of course, paragraph and article from one ordinance or another were duly given for every move by the authorities. *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, for example, was suspended under an ordinance issued in the time of the monarchy–Publications Ordinance No. 24 of 1954: it had commented on the murder on August 5 of a street vendor in al-Kāḍhimiyyah while the case was still under consideration by a Baghdād court.[20] But every one perfectly understood that the grounds cited in this, as in the other instances, were mere legal pretexts for a political action mapped out long beforehand.

Qāsim also removed by degrees nearly all of the supporters and sympathizers of the party from sensitive government positions. On 22 June, Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb lost the nominal control he had retained of the Department of Broadcasting and Television.[21] On November 15, Nazī-hah ad-Dulaimī, who had on May 3 been demoted from minister of municipal affairs to minister of state, was dropped from the cabinet altogether, jointly with 'Awnī Yūsuf, minister of public works.[22] Brigadier Ḥasan 'Abbūd was relieved from his command of the Mosul garrison on February 21, 1961,[23] and Faisal as-Sāmir from his post as minister of guidance on May 14.[24] 'Abd-ul-Wahhāb Maḥmūd resigned as ambassador to the Soviet Union on the following July 5.[25] By that time, Staff Brigadier Hāshim 'Abd-uj-Jabbār had been retired as commander of the Twentieth Brigade at Jalawlā'. In 1961, a curtain also fell on the career of Staff Brigadier Ṭaha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad, but in late 1962 he was back at his job as director of military planning. Staff Brigadier Jalāl al-Awqātī, commander of the air force, who

now to all appearance scrupulously abstained from politics, remained by Qāsim's side to the end.

Qāsim's severest repressive measures descended on the party's auxiliary mass organizations. His police, to quote an internal party document, "destroyed the organizations proper and not simply their Communist leadership."[26] It would appear, however, that the destruction was short of complete, and that the different organizations were not uniformly dealt with.

One of the more seriously affected was the Democratic Youth Federation. On May 7, 1960, all its centers in Baghdād[27] excepting its headquarters were closed down.[28] Its strength, which at the Communist flood-tide attained 84,000, had dropped to 20,000 when its second and last congress met on June 15,[29] and dwindled further when next a wave of arrests hit its cadre of activists. By the end of July, no fewer than 226 of the latter were under detention.[30] This was followed in October by a police raid on its headquarters, and by the shutting up in prison of its secretary general, Nūrī ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq Ḥusain. The federation was finally dissolved in April of 1961 on the ground that it was pursuing a policy "contrary to the interests, of the country."[31]

A similar fate overtook the Partisans of Peace. On May 7, 1961, all their offices and centers were sealed up by order of the military governor general.[32] However, their mild and discreet Secretary General ʻAzīz Sharīf,[33] a recipient of the Lenin Peace Prize,[34] was neither molested nor silenced. Moreover, the Partisans of Peace were never officially disbanded. But they had never been officially authorized, either. Qāsim had himself conveyed to them in 1960 that they did not need to apply for a license because "the peace movement is not an association but the movement of the entire people."[35] The closing of their centers did not now deter the Communists in their ranks from trying from time to time to reimpose their existence or operate in a quasi-legal fashion.[36]

The League of Iraqi Women[37] was allowed to keep its Baghdād offices open, but was greatly hampered in its activities from mid-1960 onward. Most of its 53 branches were gradually shut down. So were also the illiteracy-combating and housework-training centers that it had once maintained.[38]

The Students' Federation suffered its full share of harassment. With the abolition on September 16, 1960, of all its branches in secondary schools,[39] it lost at one swoop the bulk of its members. But the hold of the Communists upon its central executive committee was not broken, at first by reason of the strength and cohesiveness of their followers, and after 1961 in view of Qāsim's need to play them off against the newly formed, Ba'thī-led, underground National Union of the Students of Iraq.

By far the hardest blows fell to the lot of the Communist trade unionists. Action against them began after the failure of the party to achieve legal recognition, that is, after February 22, 1960, and by May was in full swing. The authorities were not overparticular as to choice of means. Sometimes, as on March 8, in the case of the Baṣrah Port Workers' Union, the whole Communist administrative committee was thrown in prison and its premises sealed.[40] This was usually accompanied by large-scale arrests of active rank-and-file unionists.[41] At other times the Communist union leaders were turned out in elections in which the dice had been well loaded, or which were conducted under open or scarcely veiled threats. In the railways, for example, in May, a few days before the elections to the workers' union, Retired Brigadier Ṣālih Zakī Tawfīq, the director general, issued the following circular:

> There is an inflation of over 25 percent of officials and workers in the Railways. . . . We have, therefore, decided to terminate the employment of every official or worker who shirks his duty or misbehaves, or does not attend regularly, or is incompetent, or interferes with politics during working hours, or slanders others by spreading false news. In this way we will get rid of the inflation and at the same time clear the institution of such people.[42]

The point of the circular could not be missed: you had better vote for the Directorate's ticket or you might find yourself among the redundant 25 percent. But the workmen did not knuckle under and in the end the Directorate had, it would appear, to tamper with the ballot.[43] The interference of the government against the Communists in this and other elections was, by the way, one of the reasons for the split in the National Democratic party in that year. In Kāmil ach-Chādirchī's own words:

> In 1960 . . . the authorities adopted in the elections of the trade unions a certain attitude which was adverse to the Communists. Some persons in our party [the reference is to Muḥammad Hadīd and his followers] began to underline the necessity of cooperating with the authorities in that direction but it was against the tradition of the party to cooperate with any side for the purpose of striking down other organizations whatever their political color.[44]

The threat of summary dismissals that the director general of railways uttered was no empty gesture. Nor was it a mere aberration of his, but an expression of a considered general policy. Thus in a communication to Qāsim, ‘Alī Shukur, the president of the Federation of Labour Unions, brought out that in the whole of the country 2,512 laborers had been “arbitrarily” discharged from their work up to mid-April I960.[45] In a further statement he indicated that by mid-September the figure had exceeded 6,000.[46] With the aid of this and other harrying methods, the government was able eventually, in May of 1961, to snatch out of Communist hands the Central Council of the General Federation of Labour Unions, but it had first made sure to put ‘Alī Shukur and other Communist members of the Council under lock and key.[47]

The crackdown on the Communists in the peasants’ associations proceeded on somewhat different lines. Cognizant of the relative thinness of their support in the countryside, Qāsim had back in 1959 begun by undermining them at the very center of their power, the legally sanctioned Founding Committee of the General Federation of Peasants’ Associations. To be more specific, from about the beginning of the summer in that year, Qāsim concentrated on building up ‘Arrāk az-Zigam, a rich peasant, a member of the National Democratic party, and an executive of the Federation and, by pitting him against its Communist President Kāḍhim Farhūd, a rural medical attendant, and encouraging him to set up a parallel extralegal founding committee, and to compete with the Federation in chartering local units, he succeeded before the summer was over in splitting the peasant movement and shaking the grip that the Communists had upon it.[48] Next, on September 6, when enough confusion had set in, he caused, as already noted, a new law to be published which, by vesting the power to charter associations in the governors of provinces, impaired the

effectiveness of the Federation and, by stipulating for the election of the leading organs by the lower units, called in question the legal standing of the founding committee itself.[49] Except in rural Kurdistan, where balancing considerations apparently necessitated a contrary line of conduct, the provincial authorities now consistently withheld charters from the new or confirmation from the old peasant associations sponsored by the Communists or suspected of being sympathetic to them. All told, on a party reckoning, 3,260 associations were denied recognition under one pretext or another. In general–outside the Kurdish zone–the greater the influence of the Communists in a province, the lesser was that province's share of peasant associations. Thus in five provinces–Baṣrah, 'Amārah, Nāṣiriyyah, Ḥillah, and Karbalā'– where the Communists had substantial backing, a total of only 371 associations were licensed, whereas in Dīwāniyyah, the home province of the National Democratic landowner and one-time Minister of Agriculture Hdaib al-Ḥājj Ḥmūd, the right was granted to as many as 779 associations.[50] By such tactics, and by the arrest and banishment of peasant-Communists and other rural party devotees,[51] the government greatly smoothed the path before 'Arrāk az-Zigam and his followers. But az-Zigam also relied heavily on the peasant notables, most of whom were well-off or of middling condition, and whom many peasants, on the Communists' own admission,[52] plainly favored as leaders of their associations. At any rate, az-Zigam was able before long to win the provincial councils[53] and ultimately, in October 1960, the presidency of the Peasants' Federation. By that time Kāḍhim Farhūd lay behind bars.[54] To this consummation no doubt contributed the impetuous course that the party steered in the heyday of its power. As Zakī Khairī, member of the Politbureau, recognized:

> The chief error into which some of the strugglers had fallen was precipitancy. They tended toward removing rich and even middle peasants from the leadership of the associations by force or in an artificial way, that is, before satisfying by argument the widest masses of the peasantry. This was an isolationist error. It helped the bourgeoisie to split the peasant movement by throwing in its lap the rich and some of the middle peasants who drew along peasant masses that still had faith in them.[55]

The party, which had in 1959 oriented itself upon the poor peasants, now altered its tactics. Its guiding line in the countryside became: “depend” on the poor peasants, including the agricultural laborers, “unite” with the middle peasants, “win over” the rich peasants and small landowners, “neutralize” the middle landowners, and “deliver the main blow” to the big landowners.[56] But the change came too late to benefit the party in any tangible way.

The hold of the Communists on the vocational associations was also broken. In all the elections to the congresses or administrative committees of the associations held after 1960, they found themselves in a minority. They lost to nationalist or conservative candidates or to people who turned their faces with every wind. They fell lowest in the elections of the Association of Lawyers, among whom the nationalists had powerful and stable support: in August 1959, when they were first swept out of the association’s executive committee, they drew 30 percent of the 888 votes polled;[57] in October 1962, in the last elections under Qāsim, they got 107 out of 534 votes, that is, only 20 percent.[58] But, if in 1959, as already noted, many Communist or pro-Communist lawyers who were in the employ of the government were not allowed to participate in the elections, in 1962 no fewer than 728 lawyers abstained. In other words, either because of faintheartedness, or loss of illusion, or fatigue, or mere choice, the bulk of the country’s 1,262 lawyers sat on the fence, or fell back, or just held to a condition of political inertness. In other associations, the Communists and their sympathizers, even though going down, did better. Thus in the elections of the biggest of the professional associations, the Union of Teachers, they fared as shown below:

Date	Known votes for pro-Communist list	Total known vote	%
January 1959	9,279	11,488	80.7
February 1960	11,622	19,760	58.8
February 1961	7,884	20,159	39.1
February 1962	5,094	17,448	29.2

Detailed results are given in Table 51-1. The figures for 1959 and the statistical shifts toward the anti-Communist list in 1961 and 1962 only in

part mirrored the genuine preferences of the voters. In those years the elections were not held in such an atmosphere of freedom as, to a comparative degree, in 1960, and do not for that reason provide as reliable an index of the actual distribution of the influence of the Communists or of their opponents. Anyhow, it is clear that in 1959 and 1960 the pro-Communist list won in all but two of the country's fourteen provinces. It lost in Ramādī, a stronghold of nationalist and conservative opinion, and in Kirkūk, where the majority appears to have gone to an independent Turkoman-dominated ticket. On the other hand, the 1962 balloting indicates that their strength remained unshakeable only in ʻAmārah, even though they triumphed also in Arbīl. In view of the undoubted change in the public mood, their losses in Karbalā' and Baghdād are probably authentic, but in Nāṣiriyyah, Ḥillah, Dīwāniyyah, Kūt, Baṣrah, and Diyālah are too acute and may have been to no little extent artificially induced. The roll-up of Sulaimāniyyah and of a portion of the vote of Arbīl by independent Kurdish groups may be explained by the semineutral attitude that the Communists took up toward the rising of Mulla Muṣṭafa al-Barzānī. Their total eclipse in Mosul was beyond question directly caused by what came to be known as the "Black Terror,"

The retreat of the Communists under Qāsim's blows encouraged certain elements of the extreme right to institute a reign of terror, which took an unbridled character in the city of Mosul but made itself felt also in Kirkūk, in the province of ar-Ramādī, in the Aʻḍhamiyyah district, and in at-Takārtah and other quarters on the Karkh side of Baghdād. The terror assumed many forms–pelting the offices of *Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb* with stones and its editorial workers with abuse; armed assaults on the processions of the Communists or on the centers of their forward organizations; and, most frequently, the mauling or murder of individual members or sympathizers of the party.[59] The local police, either through fear or affinity, or acting under orders, looked the other way. It was, to some extent and in some of its features, the situation of the first half of 1959, dramatically inverted. The Communist vexation broke out in an article in *Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*. Said the paper:

> We ask of our government neither heavy industry nor luxury nor a bright future; all we ask is peace, stability, and to sleep undisturbed. We all know that in the time of the old regime the security forces wiped out all gangs and highwaymen. We, therefore, request the government to answer this question: “Why don’t they do the same today?[60]

Behind much of the terrorism were, it would seem, obscurantist vested interests, which for a brief period in 1960 functioned in the open under the name of the Islamic party. They apparently had links with powerful conservative officers and felt that, by physically annihilating a few hundred Communists, they could annihilate the will of all the others. For this purpose they exploited persons who had suffered in the aftermath of the Mosul rising and were urged by the quest for vengeance. They also hired gangs of accomplished villains. The National Democratic leader Kāmil ach-Chādirchī told this writer that the killing of Communists in Mosul became a sort of a profession, and that well-known merchants of the city offered as high as ten dīnārs for dead members of the party.[61]

TABLE 51-1

Elections to the 1959, 1960, 1961, and 1962 Congresses of the Teachers’ Union

	Votes, United Professional List (procommunist)				Votes, Tutorial Front (anticommunist)			
	January 1959[a]	February 1960	February 1961	February 1962	January 1959[a]	February 1960	February 1961	February 1962
Arab Shī'ī Provinces								
Karbalā'[b]	[c]	541	475	497	[c]	[c]	593	601
Nāṣiriyyah	370	699	elections cancelled	106	25	333	elections cancelled	771
Ḥillah	621	787	224	112	102	410	677	602
Dīwāniyyah	[c]	683	448	56	[c]	76	498	661
'Amārah	380	622	547	605	17	367	492	543
Kūt	[c]	won unopposed	299	19	[c]		403	344
Arab Sunnī Provinces								
Ramādī	[c]	–	–	14	[c]	754	701[d]	671
Kurdish Provinces								
Arbīl	[c]	616	510	473	[c]	–	111	[e]
Sulaimāniyyah	[c]	won unopposed	524		[c]		[f]	[g]
Mixed Provinces								
Baghdād[h]	5,708	3,975	3,157	2,749	992	3,537	4,844	4,985
Baṣrah[i]	953	1,286	1,252	244	[j]	750	1,072	1,106
Mosul[k]	1,247	1,683			998	1,313	won unopposed	won unopposed
Diyālah[l]	[c]	730	71	17	[c]	598	1,011	969
Kirkūk[m]	[c]	[c]	377	202	[c]	[c]	1,002	930

[a]Procommunist list won in all provinces except Ramādī and Kirkūk.

[b]Karbalā' has a substantial minority of Persians.

[c]Figures not available.

[d]An independent list received 425 votes.

[e]A list called the "Republican Ticket" got 171 votes.

[f]An "Independent Professional List" received 446 votes.

[g]An independent list won unopposed.

[h]"Composition of Baghdād: overwhelmingly Arab; outside Greater Baghdād, predominantly Sunnī; in Greater Baghdād, probable Sunnī-Shī'ī parity.

[i]Composition of Baṣrah: predominantly Arab Shī'ī; Baṣrah town: near Sunnī-Shī'ī parity.

[j]n independent list obtained 75 votes.

[k]Composition of Mosul: predominantly Sunnī Arab in Mosul city and Kurdish in countryside; about one-fifth of urban and one-ninth of rural population Christians; a substantial number of Yazīdīs.

[l]Composition of Diyālah: about one-fourth of population Kurds; one-half Shī'ī Arabs; rest Sunnī Arabs.

[m]Composition of Kirkūk: about half of population Kurds; rest Turkomans, Arabs, and Assyrians.

Sources: Teachers' Union; *Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, 24 and 25 January 1959; *Az-Zamān*, 24 and 25 January 1959; *Al-Ahālī*, 26 January 1959; *Al-Bilād*, 14 February 1960; *Al-Bilād*, 11 and 12 February 1961; *Az-Zamān*, 3 February 1962.

As to the number of victims, there are no complete figures. Nor is it now possible to check the accuracy of the figures on hand. Anyhow, on 23 October 1961, at the Twenty-second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Communist First Secretary Ḥusain ar-Raḍī maintained

that up to that date 286 “Communists and democrats” had died “in broad daylight” at the hands of assassins.[62] At about the same time, another Communist source put the total of wounded at 1,572, and of the “registered cases of police and bandit raids” on the premises of Communist-influenced organizations at 7,510. It was also affirmed that 3,424 families had been compelled to leave their homes.[63] By the end of the Qāsim regime, the terror’s toll of killed and displaced had swelled: in Mosul alone, according to the secretary of the Mosul Branch of the National Democratic party, no fewer than 400 people, only a fraction of whom were “real” Communists, had been killed, and as many as 50,000 had been forced to migrate to Baghdād and other places. Often the killings were perpetrated by the same roughs who had been involved in the atrocities of 1959.[64]

In fighting the Communists, the extreme right did not merely have recourse to violence. It pressed into its service another weapon, that of religious casuistry. Thus on April 3, 1960, Shaikh Murtaḍa al-Yasīn of Najaf delivered a *fatwa–a* formal religious opinion–which appeared in *Al-Fayḥā’*, a mouthpiece of the Islamic party, and in which he stated that “adherence to the Communist party or lending it support is one of the greatest sins which religion denounces.”[65] In the same month, Mirza Mahdī ash-Shīrāzī, also of Najaf, held that prayers and fasting by Moslems who had embraced communism were “unacceptable, because of lack of faith.”[66] Later, in June, ash-Shīrāzī further affirmed that it was not permissible for Moslems to buy meat from a sheep butcher who believed in Communist principles, and that a youth of this persuasion was not entitled to inherit from his father.[67]

But the *‘ulamā’* had, as a class, declined in stature, and people did not pay as much attention to what they had to say as in decades gone by. Nonetheless, the *fatwas* now published had some effect. While benefiting the right, they simultaneously greased the wheels of Qāsim’s own campaign against the Communists.

A number of other factors also strengthened the hand of the government. One was the decline in the spirit of many of the Iraqis, which manifested itself in apathy, disenchantment, lassitude, and a yearning for tranquillity–a decline which, as pointed out elsewhere, began to be perceptible after mid-1959, but which now sharpened.

One other factor was the deterioration of the economy, and more particularly of agriculture. Thrown into fright by the revolution, some of the landed shaikhs migrated soon after to the towns, and with them went their capital. Others put all their machines and all their seed into the fields that the Agrarian Reform Law permitted them to retain. Some of the lands, being abandoned before they could be redistributed, were left untilled or uncropped. The officials sent to help the peasants had much ardor but little technical skill or administrative experience. But it was not so much due to the shake-up in agrarian relations as to the two successive seasons of drought with which Iraq was afflicted that agricultural production failed appallingly in 1959 and 1960. To a considerable extent the failure, as a glance at Table 42-5 will show, was a cyclical and recurring thing. All the same, cries soon arose from the right as well as from the center blaming the Communists for this state of affairs[68] and demanding a reining in of the countryside and a decisive reassertion of "the power of the law." This fitted in with Qāsim's plans.

The political isolation of the Communists also helped Qāsim a great deal. They had tried repeatedly in 1959 to break out of this condition, but in vain. In 1960 they stepped up their efforts. They recirculated the slogan of "United National Front,"[69] held out an olive branch to the National Democratic party, expressed "surprise" at not finding *Al-Ahālī upon* "its previous course of struggle in favor of democracy" and with them "against the subversive activities of our enemies," and wished "from the bottom of our hearts for a reconsideration of its present policy."[70] As their situation worsened, their appeals became more intense. Wrote their mouthpiece, *Ath-Thabāt*, in November: "Those who stand in the face of national unity [and no one mistook whom the paper meant] make no difference between this or that party. They support one group to strike the other, afterwards abandoning it. Their only object is to crush the national movement in its entirety."[71] At first the National Democrats gave the Communists the cold shoulder. "By their 'United National Front' slogan, the Communists," they said, "merely seek to transform all the other national parties into their satellites."[72] But soon they began to speak with two different voices. Old Kāmel ach-Chādīrchī, who had been out of politics because of his strong antipathy to the military regime and to Qāsim's cult of personality, now, reentering the arena, openly deplored that his party, instead of working

toward the aim for which it was founded–a genuine democratic life–should be offering itself as a tool for Qāsim's campaign of repression against the Communists. He also demanded that the party should quit the government rather than continue to share in unpopular policies which it was not itself initiating. It was on this issue that he broke with his erstwhile lieutenant Muḥammad Ḥadīd who, clinging to a "positive line" toward Qāsim, led his supporters out of the ranks in May 1960 and in the following June formed his own National Progressive party.[73] The result was not so much the ending of the isolation of the Communists as the weakening of the National Democrats. When in February-April 1961 the party was riven by a further dispute, and Ḥusain Jamīl, Chādirchī's other principal lieutenant, fell out with him also on the question of a rapprochement with the Communists, the party became completely ineffective, and in October suspended all its activities.[74] Chādirchī took the position that "the Communists have made mistakes but are not criminals."[75] Later, in answer to cries from the right that he was a Communist, he said: "Had I been a Communist, I would have joined the Communist party, for I do not consider communism as something disgraceful." "My fault," he added, "is that I am very frank, too frank for a politician in a country like Iraq."[76] However, although he and the Communists occasionally rowed in the same boat–in October 1960, for example, they put up a common candidate in the elections for the presidency of the Peasants' Federation–he nevertheless refused right along to enter into a formal front with them, unless the other parties, including the Ba'th, joined in.[77]

The Ba'th party, whom a chasm of blood separated from the Communists, would not in 1960-1961 even consider the idea. However, in early 1962 it relented. A meeting took place between 'Abd-us-Sattār ad-Dūrī, a member of its Baghdād Branch Command and a Communist leader of middling rank, in which the possibilities of common action were felt out. The prospects seemed promising enough for the Communists to express, at a subsequent point, interest in contacts at a higher level, but it was conveyed to them that there could be no hope of an agreement unless they first adopted an "unequivocal and daring attitude" against the Qāsim regime. Upon this the talks foundered. Thus goes the Ba'thī version of what happened.[78] But, according to the Communists, after the Ba'thists and their allies had begun "conspiring" to pull Qāsim down, they realized that the

“insurmountable obstacle” in their way was “first and last” the Communist party. Therefore, to make things easier for themselves, they “tried to induce us by promises and threats to abandon his regime–in truth only by threats: if you do not come to its defense, we will not massacre you!” Simultaneously, through elements loyal to them, they were pressing Qāsim “to push forward with his persecution of our party and of the very forces by which our party had determined to defend his regime”–a regime “which although military and dictatorial in character was nonetheless patriotic, for which reason attempts at its overthrow had been forbidden by our party.”[79]

At any rate, it is indubitable that the Communists never turned their backs on Qāsim. Moreover, they took his blows without serious resistance. They also withstood for many months strong pressure from their own rank and file for a reversion to underground struggle. When in June 1960 a clandestine radio, “The Voice of the People,” went on the air and began broadcasting in the idiom peculiar to the party, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* hastened to express its disapproval.[80] If afterwards the Communists fought Qāsim back, as in November 1960, when they organized a sit-down strike at a tobacco factory in Baghdād, or in March 1961 when they joined in a protest of taxi drivers initiated by the Ba‘th party against an increase of the excise tax on gasoline, they fought him half-heartedly or on a limited scale. From their central political line, “to fix the regime firmly upon democratic foundations,” they did not swerve.[81] The slogan implied that the regime could still be “democratized,” that is, induced to restore their freedom of action–a wholly unrealistic premise, it goes without saying. But the line, when coupled with their determination to oppose any attempt to bring Qāsim down, left no one in doubt that they had tied their fate to that of the premier.

With Qāsim’s sharp fall in public esteem, particularly after the outbreak of the Kurdish war in the summer of 1961, this continued identification with his regime cost the Communists much in popular support and must be accounted as another factor in their decline. The dissatisfaction in the ranks also steadily grew and, pushing up, found a path in November of that year to the summit of the party. Turning it into account, First Secretary Ḥusain ar-Raḍī opened, at a session of the Central Committee, a resolute attack upon the “right” elements in the Politbureau.[82] He began by asserting that

he had for some time become convinced of the need for a tougher attitude toward Qāsim, but could not press his point of view because of a bloc led by ‘Āmer ‘Abdal-lah, Zakī Khairī, Muḥammad Ḥusain Abū-l-‘Īss, and Bahā’-ud-Dīn Nūrī.[83] He then accused ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah of being an “agent” of Qāsim, and requested that he and his three collaborators be purged from the Politbureau. The Central Committee yielded to him and, upon his recommendation, reorganized itself as shown in Table 51-2. ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah left soon after for Eastern Europe. Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, who, in addition to his duties as first secretary and his exclusive supervisory powers over the party’s military section, took now direct charge of the Baghdād organization, became henceforth the all in all in the party.

The change in the command did not, however, bring a change in strategy, but merely in tactics. The only really new thing was the decision to reissue clandestinely the central party paper under a new name, *Tarīq-ush-Sha‘b* (“The Path of the People”), and to raise to a higher key the criticisms levelled at Qāsim. The leadership did not hide that it was doing this with a heavy heart. “The Communists,” it said, “have been forced to issue their battling paper secretly . . . despite the prominence that this gives to contradictions between classes which must stand together against imperialism and the reaction–contradictions which it is not necessary to bring out with such sharpness in the existing stage, the stage of realizing national democracy.” While pointing out that “the evils of personal rule” had not only “encompassed all the classes of the people and the political groups regardless of their tendencies,” but had also by virtue of the war in Kurdistan “attained the acme of danger to national unity” and, while calling upon “all the patriotic forces” to step up their struggle “against one-man rule and for the fixing of the regime upon national democratic foundations,” it appealed at the same time to “the premier personally to mend the situation before it is too late and to rise to a sense of national responsibility.”[84] In its report on the session of the Central Committee just concluded, it dotted the i’s: “We are not enemies [it affirmed] of the person of General Qāsim but of his method of one-man rule . . . and his denial of the rights of the people and [oppose him] to this extent only. On the other hand, we are with him insofar as he contributes to the defense of national independence and the combating of imperialism and war.” It also declared that the party still clung to its resolve to resist any attempt to overturn the government by force:

> The correlation of forces being what it is [it explained], any coup that is likely to be pulled in the present circumstances cannot be in the interest of democracy and the people. The liberal bourgeoisie is not capable of undertaking such an action unless it leans on the forces of the right and of the reaction. A coup from above could only, therefore, have for result a strengthened and more oppressive dictatorship.[85]

In view of the fact that Ḥusain ar-Raḍī made no fundamental change in policy, it may be wondered what was at bottom behind his purge of ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah. It is, of course, possible that their conflict was merely a conflict as to tactics rather than as to strategy, but could also have been less a conflict of ideas than between personalities. Anyhow, at least at this point of time, things were for the party what they were, not because of ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah or of his "right" tendencies, but because they were inherently difficult. No other strategy was really open to the Communists. Their situation had remained essentially the same as after mid-1959: they could not take the reins into their hands, and any alternative to Qāsim's regime could only be worse for them.

The relative hardening of the tactical line of the party may have sharpened Qāsim's sense of isolation, which in turn could explain his release in December 1961 of all political, including Communist, detainees.[86] His not unconnected decision in the same month to annul the concession of the oil companies in areas not actually under exploitation[87] could be viewed as another attempt on his part to recapture some of his lost popular support. The November 30 Soviet veto on the admission to the United Nations of Kuwait, to which he had laid claim in June, also brought a shift in his mood toward the Communists, who now abandoned their direct attacks upon him. But the political truce between them was broken off when, after a sizable demonstration by the Communists in May 1962 calling for peace with the Kurds, Qāsim put many of their followers under arrest. In July, the party was accusing his government of degenerating into a "police state," but was still appealing to him for a new departure in internal policy.[88] In fact, it never forsook him.

TABLE 51-2

Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Radi's Fourth Central Committee (November 1961 to February 1963)

Name	*Party function in February 1963*	*Nation and religion*	*Date and place of birth*
Members of Secretariat			
Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī	First secretary with exclusive supervisory powers over military organization of party; *mas'ūl* of Baghdād	(See Table 31-1)	
Hādī Hāshim al-'Aḍhamī	*Mas'ūl* of Workers' Bureau	(See Table 31-1)	
Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī	*Mas'ūl* of Peasants' Bureau	(See Table 37-1)	
George Ḥanna Tallū	*Mas'ūl* of relations with Communist parties abroad[b]	(See Table 31-1)	
Other full members of Politbureau			
Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-'Aballī	*Mas'ūl* of correspondence with party Zones and Branches	(See Table 31-1)	
'Azīz Muḥammad	*Mas'ūl* of Kurdish Branch of party	(See Table 42-6)	
'Abd-us-Salām an-Nāṣirī	Ex-*mas'ūl* of Baghdād; in Moscow 1963	(See Table 22-1)	
Candidate members of Politbureau			
'Azīz ash-Shaikh	*Mas'ul* of Committee of Democratic Guidance[c]	(See Table 37-1)	
'Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd	Member of Bureau of Kurdish Branch of party	(See Table 31-1)	
Bāqir Ibrahīm al-Mūsawī	*Mas'ūl* of Mid-Euphrates Party Zone	Arab, Shī'ī	? , Kūfah
Other full members of Central Committee			
'Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf	*Mas'ūl* of Education Bureau, Economic Committee, Press Committee, and editor of *Tarīq-ush-Sha'b*	(See Table 37-1)	
Sharīf ash-Shaikh	*Mas'ūl* of Relations with national parties[d]	(See Table 37-1)	
'Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā'īl	*Mas'ūl* of Finance Bureau	(See Table 14-2)	
Ḥamzah Salmān aj-Jubūrī	In prison 1961-1963	(See Table 42-6)	
Nāṣir 'Abbūd	In Bulgaria since 1959	(See Table 29-1)	
Ṣāliḥ Mahdī Duglah	*Mas'ūl* of Southern Party Zone	Arab, Shī'ī	1923, 'Amārah
'Umar 'Alī ash-Shaikh	Member of Bureau of Kurdish Branch of party	Kurd, Sunnī	1924, Sulaimāniyyah

Profession	*Education*	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*[a]	*Subsequent history*
		From a family of *sayyids* of middling income; son of a small trader		Member, Central Committee, 1963 to present.
Schoolteacher	Elementary Teachers' Training School	Lower middle class	1943 (20)	Arrested 1963 but broke prison in June; member, Central Committee 1963 to present.
Engineer	Engineering School	Lower landowning class; son of a small landowner	1945 (21)	Member, Central Committee, 1963 to present.

Name	*Party function in February 1963*	*Nation and religion*	*Date and place of birth*
Ḥusain Sulṭān	*Mas'ūl* of Mid-Euphrates Party Zone 1962; in Moscow 1963	Arab, Shī'ī	1920, Najaf
Nāfi' Yūnis[e]	*Mas'ūl* of military organization of party	(See Table 22-1)	
Candidate members of Central Committee			
'Azīz al-Ḥājj 'Alī Ḥaidar	Party representative at Prague on journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*	(See Table 23-1)	
'Azīz Sharīf	*Mas'ūl* of Peace Partisans	(See Table 42-6)	
Ṣāliḥ ar-Rāziqī	Member of Bureau of Mid-Euphrates Party Zone	(See Table 37-1)	
Āra Khajādūr	In Prague 1963	Armenian, Christian	1924, Baghdād
Sulṭān Mulla 'Alī	Member, Military Committee of party	Arab, Shī'ī	? , Baṣrah
'Abd-us-Sattār Mahdī Muḥammad Riḍā	Member, Military Committee of party	Arab, Sunnī	? , Baghdād
Thābet Ḥabīb al-'Ānī	Member, Military Committee of party	Arab, Sunnī	? , 'Ānah

Profession	*Education*	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*[a]	*Subsequent history*
Textile worker	Elementary	Working class; son of a worker	1943 (23)	In prison 1963 to present.
Ex-clerk with a private firm; oil worker	Secondary	Lower middle class	1946 (22)	Member, Central Committee, 1963 to 1968; arrested 1968, released subsequently.
Worker	Elementary	Working class; son of a worker		In prison 1963, released later.
Schoolteacher	Elementary Teachers' Training School	Peasant class; son of a peasant		Killed 1963.
Surveyor	Secondary	Lower middle class		Member, Central Committee, 1963 to 1968; arrested 11 April 1968, released subsequently.

[a]No members listed here in full had prior political activity.

[b]Exact title: *mas'ūl* of external relations.

[c]This committee directed the activities of the Union of Students, the Youth Federation, and the League for the Defense of Women's Rights, among others.

[d]Exact title: *mas'ūl* of national relations.

[e]Married to the sister of 'Azīz Shaikh.

Sources: Undated statement made in April 1963 by 'Azīz ash-Shaikh, candidate member of Politbureau, in Iraqi Police File No. QS/26; supplement to verbal statement of Sharīf ash-Shaikh, member of the Central Committee, dated 27 March 1963, in File No. QS/26; conversation of writer with Sharīf ash-Shaikh in Baghdād Central Prison, 9 February 1964; and Police Files Nos. 3401, 4583, 3506, 3345, 2610, 479, 3078, 4877, 7909, 4242, 357, 3368 and QS/40; QS/59, QS/61.

TABLE 51-3

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to Ar-Raḍī's Fourth Central Committee

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	No.	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq
Moslems			
Shī'ī Arabs	9	34.6	44.9
Sunnī Arabs	9[a]	34.6	28.6
Kurds	6[b]	23.1	12.7
Turkomans	–	–	3.4
Persians	–	–	3.3
Jews	–	–	.3
Christians	2[c]	7.7	6.4
Sabeans	–	–	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	.1
Total	26	100.0	100.0

Education

	No.	%
No particulars	1	3.9
Elementary	5	19.2
Secondary	8	30.8
College	12	46.1
Total	26	100.0

Age Group in 1961

	No.	%
No particulars	4	15.3
28 years	1	3.9
30-34 years	3	11.5
35-39 years	12	46.1
40-44 years	3	11.5
45 years	1	3.9
55 years	1	3.9
57 years	1	3.9
Total	26	100.0

Class Origin

	No.	%
Working class	5	19.2
Peasant class	3	11.6
Lower middle class		
sayyid families	6	23.1
others	11	42.2
Impoverished upper *sayyid* class	1	3.9
Total	26	100.0

Sex

	No.
Male	26
Female	–
Total	26

Occupation or Former Occupation

	No.	%
Students[d]	2	7.7
Members of professions	14[e]	53.8
White collar	3	11.5
Workers	5	19.2
Trading petty bourgeoisie	1	3.9
No particulars	1	3.9
Total	26	100.0

Length of Association with Communist Movement in 1961

No. of years	No. of members
No particulars	4
10 years	1
11 years	1
12 years	1
13 years	1
14 years	2
15 years	1
16 years	7
18 years	5
19 years	1
20 years	1
33 years	1
Total	26

Fate by the Time of the Collapse of Ba'thī Regime

	No.
Killed or died under torture	8
Revealed party secrets under torture	2
Defected	2
In prison	3
In underground or abroad	11
Total	26

[a]Including 1 of mixed Arab Indian parentage.

[b]Including 1 Failiyyah Shī'ī Kurd.

[c]1 Arabized Chaldean and 1 Arabized Armenian.

[d]After leaving school: in prison or underground.

[e]6 lawyers; 5 schoolteachers; 1 college professor; 1 engineer; 1 surveyor.

It seems curious that Qāsim should have been whittling down the strength of the Communists, even as the nationalists were sharpening their weapons. Was this not in conflict with his characteristic policy of balance? Actually in his last years, Qāsim did not do his seesawing as skillfully as in 1958-1959. His power of discernment weakened. The governing of Iraq, never an easy task, had proved too onerous. Moreover, after the Mosul rising, Qāsim was prone to think too little of the nationalists. He became anchored in the belief that the greater peril to him was from the left. The attempt of the Ba'thists upon his life he interpreted as a desperate act, as a sign of weakness. Their disenchantment and falling out with 'Abd-un-Nāṣir in 1959, the split in the Iraqi Ba'th's own ranks in 1961–the ex-Ba'th Secretary Fū'ād ar-Rikābī taking the side of the Egyptian leader–and finally the secession of Syria from the U.A.R. confirmed Qāsim in his views. At the same time, he left the underground cells of the Communists by and large intact, and their chief leaders free and unmolested. However, by relentlessly

cutting up their auxiliary mass organizations, he deprived them of the means by which they could have perhaps successfully defended him.

52

THE BA‘THISTS MAKE PREPARATION, THE COMMUNISTS GIVE WARNING

The coup that was to destroy Qāsim in February of 1963 was essentially the conception of the Ba‘th, but of a reconstructed and reenergized Ba‘th. The miscarrying of the 1959 plot to kill the premier had brought misfortune upon the party. Activists were one after the other nabbed and committed to prison. Whole organizations disintegrated. Fū’ād ar-Rikābī, the secretary in the Iraqi Region, fled to Syria. The few cells that remained intact were left in the care of Ḥāzem Jawād, a 24-year-old Shī’ī from Nāṣiriyyah, a descendant of a poor *mu’azzī*–religious condoler–and a cousin of ar-Rikābī. However, in January 1960 or thereabouts, a special organ, the Bureau of Iraq, came into being in Damascus, and took in hand the task of helping Jawād to put the party back on its feet. One of the three members of the bureau was Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān, a 33-year-old Arab Sunnī lawyer from ash-Shūhānī, a village in Diyālah, and the son of the landed shaikh of the tribe of al-’Azzah. Another was Ṭāleb Shabīb, a 29-year-old Arab Shī’ī engineer from Rumaithah, a scion of an impoverished landowning aristocratic family, and a grandnephew of Shaikh Khawwām al-‘Abd ‘Abbās, chief of the tribe of aḍh-Ḍhawālim. The third and chief figure in the bureau and the man with whose name the party would be indissolubly linked in the next three critical years of its history was ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī.[1]

As-Sa‘dī was born in 1928 in Baghdād. Although his grandfather, a peasant from Hibhib–a village in the province of Diyālah–is said to have been a full-blooded Kurd, he himself appears to have had no kind of Kurdish consciousness and was, in the words of a nationalist source,[2] “in practice an Arab.” His father, an agricultural agent of the well-known family of al-Ḥaidarī, came to Baghdād from Hibhib in the twenties and, according to Kāmel ach-Chādirchī,[3] took to wife a girl from the quarter of

Bāb-ish-Shaikh; but having remarried afterwards, relieved himself of responsibility for her upkeep and his son's upbringing. The boy led for a time a vagabond life, somewhat in the manner of young Rousseau. But he was resourceful and created his own opportunities. Though never a good scholar, he managed to work his way through the School of Commerce. While still a student, he fell under the influence of the Ba'th Secretary Fū'ād ar-Rikābī. In 1952 he joined the party and, possessing qualities suited to underground struggle–courage, self-confidence, ruthlessness, and a marked organizing capacity–had by 1958 risen to membership in the Command of the Iraqi Region. Hunted by Qāsim's police, he slipped away in November 1959 to Syria. When two months or so later, partly upon his initiative, the Bureau of Iraq was created in Damascus, he quickly showed himself to be its most able figure, attracting the notice of the over-all National Command, which in or around April 1960 ordered him back to Baghdād to take charge of the Iraqi branch of the Ba'th party.

His talent as an organizer and his practical efficiency proved now invaluable. The cells were reformed and steadied. Secrecy was observed. Discipline became strict. Simultaneously, the appeal of the party grew. To this contributed the general mood of disenchantment with Qāsim and the growing incoherence and arbitrariness of his government. The daring attempt upon Qāsim's life, the defiant spirit of which several of his assailants gave proof at their public trial in 1959-1960, and their defense of their ideas rather than of their persons, had also surrounded the Ba'th with an aura of heroism in the mind of the nationalistically inclined segment of the populace. The breaking away from the mother organization on 24 June 1961 of ex-Secretary Fū'ād ar-Rikābā and his small band of followers and his laying of "contacts with British Intelligence" to the charge of "certain elements of the National Command"[4] may have ruffled the party, however lightly. On the other hand, in its favor worked the unsuccessful war against the Kurds, the deepening disaffection of the officer corps, and the palpable decline of the economy.

By 1962 as-Sa'dī had succeeded not only in rehabilitating and expanding the party, but also in converting it into a guiding nucleus for a wider grouping, the Nationalist Front, which, apart from the Ba'th, consisted of allied nationalist officers, remnants of the Independence party, and members of the National Union of Students, the Teachers' Federation, and

other professional associations. In early May of the same year, as-Saʿdī felt confident enough to call a secret congress of the party in Baghdād and arrange for the election of the leadership, which later that month the Baʿth National Command, meeting at Ḥomṣ, would summon to prepare a coup against Qāsim.

The newly elected center or, to call it by its proper name, Command in the Iraqi Region, which was composed as shown in Table 52-1, proceeded to make the forces of the party ready for the governmental overturn. In the months that followed, it set on foot in the more significant towns and especially in Baghdād a network of "Alarm Committees" which later would constitute the core of what came to be known as the "Nationalist Guard," and whose members, mostly student-Baʿthists, were, at a signal from the party, to take to the streets, with their submachine guns and other arms concealed in their civilian clothes, and to await further orders.

TABLE 52-1

Command of the Baʿth Party in the Iraqi Region at the Time of the Coup of 8 February 1963

Name	*Nation and sect*	*Date and place of birth*	*Profession*
ʿAlī Ṣāleḥ as-Saʿdī (Secretary)	Arabized Fuwaili Kurd, Shīʿī	1928, Baghdād; originally from Hibhib[a]	Party worker
Ḥāzem Jawād	Arab, Shīʿī	1935, Nāṣiriyyah	Party worker
Ṭāleb Shabīb	Arab, Shīʿī	1931, Rumaithah	Engineer
Ḥamdī ʿAbd-ul-Majīd	Arab, Sunnī	1929, Baghdād; originally from ʿĀnah	Secondary schoolteacher
Karīm Shintāf	Arab, Sunnī	1934, Ramādī; originally from ʿĀnah	Schoolteacher; employee of the Ministry of Guidance
Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī	Arab, Shīʿī	1934, Najaf	Party worker
Ḥamīd Khalkhāl	Arab, Shīʿī	1932, Hindiyyah	Secondary schoolteacher
Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān[c]	Arab, Sunnī	1927, ash-Shūhānī[d]	Lawyer

Education	*Class origin*	*Political activity prior to adherence to Ba'th party*
College of Commerce	Peasant class; son of a gardener and agent of the landowning al-Ḥaidarī family	Member of Independence party.
Expelled from Higher Teachers' Training College[b]	Trading religious lower middle class; son of a *mu'azzī* (condoler) and *kaḥḥāl* (distributor of primitive medicaments)	–
Completed three years at the School of Engineering, London University	Landowning aristocratic class; son of an impoverished landowner	Member of Communist party 1948-1951.
Higher Teachers' Training College	Trading lower middle class; son of a petty trader	–
College of Arts	Transport workers' class; son of a truck driver	–
Expelled from College of Medicine[b]	Religious lower middle class; son of a *mu'min* (man of religion)	Supporter of Independence party.
Higher Teachers' Training College	Peasant class; son of a peasant	–
Law School	Landowning shaikhly class; son of the shaikh of the tribe of al-'Azzah	Member of Independence party.

[a]A village in the Diyālah province.

[b]For political reasons.

[C]A1-Khaizarān was "frozen" by the Fifth National Congress of the Ba'th party held in Ḥomṣ in 1962.

[d]A village in the Diyālah province.

The strictly military plan was drawn up by a Military Bureau of six, with as-Sa'dī as secretary and Ḥāzem Jawād, Ṭāleb Shabīb, Retired Brigadier Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ṣāleḥ Mahdī 'Ammāsh, and Retired Staff Lieutenant Colonel 'Abd-us-Sattār 'Abd-ul-Latīf as members. Al-Bakr, a 48-year-old Sunnī Arab Free Officer from a family of small landowners which had provided the chieftains of the Begāt tribe in Takrīt for decades, and a Ba'thī since 1960, had previously–two months after the July Revolution–been involved in a plot against the Qāsim regime. 'Abd-us-Sattār 'Abd-ul-Latīf, a 36-year-old Sunnī Arab from al-A'dhamiyyah, a son of a civil official at the Ministry of Defence, and a member in 1957-1958 of the Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers,[5] had joined the party in the middle fifties, and was regarded as "one of the

boldest and most intelligent of the officer-Ba‘thists.” ‘Ammāsh, who was born in 1925 in Baghdād of a Sunnī Arab peasant-*ḍammān*,[6] had adhered to the Ba‘th as early as 1952[7] and to the Free Officers’ movement in 1956, had had a role, as noted elsewhere, in the attempt upon Qāsim’s life, and now served as head of the administration in the air force, directly under its Communist commander, Brigadier Jalāl al-Awqātī. From time to time a number of other Ba‘thī officers took part in the proceedings of the Military Bureau, notably Staff Colonel Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī, commander of the Fourth Tank Regiment at Abū Ghraib; Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ḥardān at-Takrītī,[8] commandant of the air base at Kirkūk; and Flight Major Mundhir al-Wandāwī,[9] a deputy squadron leader at al-Ḥabbāniyyah.[10]

The immediate task that the Military Bureau set for itself was not so much the widening of the foothold of the Ba‘th in the army, as the winning over to the idea of a coup of the chief officers of important striking units, regardless of how they felt about the social views of the party. These views were not, in any case, very clearly spelled out.

The plan of action that the bureau ultimately adopted was, of course, inspired by the situation it was facing. With ease it traced the weight of Qāsim’s power to two centers of gravity: the Ministry of Defence, within the capital on the east bank of the Tigris, where he had concentrated some 2,500 men from his own brigade, the Nineteenth, and provided them with heavy arms, antiaircraft guns, and ample ammunition; and ar-Rashīd Camp, six miles southeast of Baghdād, where, with a view to a swift transition to the counterblow in an emergency, he had organized a special striking force of infantry, tanks, and MIGs. That “most of the no fewer than seventy Communist pilots” were, according to Ṭāleb Shabīb, member of the bureau, stationed at ar-Rashīd, made a direct and powerful stroke against the base all the more necessary from the point of view of the Ba‘th. It was also deemed vital to liquidate the Communist air force commander, Brigadier al-Awqātī, from the beginning. Other primary targets pointed themselves out: the radio transmitter at Abū Ghraib, nine miles to the west of Baghdād, and the broadcasting studio in the quarter of aṣ-Ṣālḥiyyah on the Karkh side of the city. The Military Bureau forgot completely about the television station.

If the practical objectives of the coup were to a considerable extent determined by Qāsim’s disposition of his defensive forces, the means by which the objectives could be secured were dictated by the particular

distribution of the reliable support that the Ba‘th had in the thick of the army. The ground units nearest to the capital in which the party had sufficient adherents or allies were the Fourth Tank Regiment at Abū Ghraib and the mechanized Eighth Infantry Brigade at Ḥabbāniyyah.[11] The air unit closest at hand upon which it could count was the Sixth Squadron, also at Ḥabbāniyyah. Qāsim had apparently allowed the stationing there and at Kirkūk of Ba‘thī and other nationalist pilots in strength, to balance the concentration of Communist airmen at ar-Rashīd and, to a lesser degree, at Shu‘aybah, west of Baṣrah.

Toward the middle of December of 1962, the mode of the action was settled. The date was fixed for 9:00 in the morning of Friday, 18 January 1963. The movement of troops was to start by day rather than under cover of night in order to avoid the raising of an alarm, the eyes of Qāsim in the army being more adapted to nocturnal vigil. Friday was chosen because it was the Moslem Sabbath, when many of the defenders would be off duty. At the concerted hour planes from Ḥabbāniyyah, led by Flight Major Mundhir al-Wandāwī, were to bomb the Ministry of Defence, ground the MIGs at ar-Rashīd air base, and prepare to interfere promptly against any countermove by Qāsim. Simultaneously, Ba‘thī and pro-Ba‘thī officers belonging to the Armored Corps were to make their way into Abū Ghraib and, with the help of their people inside the camp, to gain control of the Fourth Tank Regiment. An armored column was thereupon to head for the radio transmitter, which was only few minutes away, and, overpowering its guards, to lay firm hold upon it. The broadcast of “Proclamation No. 1” was to follow. As the tanks were equipped only with ammunition for their machine guns, a second column was to carry by assault the depot at al-Fallūjah, twenty miles or so to the west, even as other detachments were to occupy the studio at aṣ-Ṣālḥiyyah, surround the Ministry of Defence, and seal off the base at ar-Rashīd. Eventually, the battalions of the Eighth Infantry Brigade which, if things worked according to plan, would in the meantime have been seized by the insurgents and placed under the command of Retired Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Ghanī ar-Rāwī, a friend of the Ba‘th, were on their arrival from Ḥabbāniyyah to cooperate closely with the tanks of the Fourth Regiment and take a direct hand in the capture of the Ministry of Defence. In all operations the armed members of the “Alarm

Committees”–the future “Nationalist Guard”–were to play a supporting role.[12]

The execution of the plan really started on 24 December 1962 with the declaration, upon the initiative of the Ba‘th, of a strike by nationalist students at ash-Sharqiyyah Secondary School in Baghdād, which on the following day spread to all other secondary schools and on the twenty-ninth to the university. The pretext was the beating up by military policemen of students who had picked a quarrel with the son of Fāḍil al-Mahdāwī, the president of the “People’s Court,”[13] but the real intent was to divert the attention of Qāsim from the army and throw out a screen for the forthcoming coup.

The Kurdish Democrats had, about a month earlier, come to the Communists with a proposal for common action against Qāsim. “If we join forces,” they said, “we can seize the power.” But the Communists did not think that a coalition between them was enough to tip the political balance in their favor, and turned down the proposal. The Kurdish Democrats, facing in the other direction, now ordered their student-followers to throw in their lot with the student-Ba‘thists. The Communists, for their part, organized at once a special antistrike committee and warned their cells that the strike formed part of “a conspiracy.”[14]

In fact, by virtue of the footing they had in the First Company of the Fourth Tank Regiment–the Ba‘th party was entrenched in the Second and, to a lesser degree, in the Third Company–the Communists sensed that something was afoot, and put Qāsim on his guard.[15] In a public statement issued on 3 January 1963 they declared:

> Information at hand indicates that the armored regiments in the Baghdād camps[16] and the Nineteenth Infantry Brigade have become the centers of activity of a good number of reactionary and adventurous officers who hope to turn these centers into springboards for a sudden pounce upon the independence of the country, and with this end in view have been setting date after date. Their present date acquires a special significance by reason of the gravity of the existing political crisis and the number of visits which some of the senior American spies are now making to our country.[17]

The Communists went on to appeal to the government for a “wide and effective” purge of the army, the release of the “thousands” of political prisoners and detainees, and the reinstating of the party’s freedom of action. They also called upon the “popular masses” to be “vigilant” and ready to reply “as one man” to the threats of “the agents of the imperialists.” They themselves, however, did not take any palpable practical measures to meet the impending overturn.[18]

Their warning to Qāsim was not very precise, but it did ensue in the retirement from the army on 6 January of a number of the implicated officers, including Lieutenant Colonel Jāber Ḥasan Ḥaddād and Lieutenant Colonel Ṣabrī Khalaf of the Armored Corps. Moreover, orders were given for the radiators of the tanks belonging to the Fourth Regiment to be emptied of water after each spell of training, which had the effect of immobilizing the tanks completely. But the heart of the plot was not touched. The coup was put off to February 25, the day of Īd-il-Fiṭr, the Moslem festival marking the end of the period of fasting. But Qāsim hit again on February 3 and 4, pensioning off more officers, and this time apprehending ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī, the secretary of the Ba‘th Regional Command, and Lieutenant Colonel Ṣāleḥ Mahdī ‘Ammāsh, member of the Ba‘th Military Bureau. Fearing further arrests, the leaders still at large took the decision to deliver the blow on Friday, February 8.[19]

53

“THE BITTEREST OF YEARS”

The tragic Days of February–the Days of the Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth–which witnessed terrible collisions between one whole segment of Iraqis and another, opened with the shooting down of the Communist air force chief, Brigadier Jalāl al-Awqātī. He had driven out with his child to a confectioner’s shop near his home. As he descended from his car, a motor vehicle suddenly drew up. Its passengers whipped out guns and fired at him. Struck in the shoulder, he tried to run for cover but was hit again in the head and fell to the sidewalk. His assailants sped away and vanished. The silence in the street was only broken by a child’s cry: “Bāba! Bāba!”[1] It was shortly after 8:30 in the morning of the eighth, the fourteenth day of the holy month of Ramaḍān. Baghdād had not yet fully awaked out of its sleep, but within few hours would have the scars of a field of battle.

News of the killing of al-Awqātī had not reached Qāsim when, at around 9:00, two Hawker-Hunter jets divebombed the Rashīd aerodrome, making the runway unusable. Minutes later, the same and other Hawker-Hunters and some MIG-17s, flying in groups of two or three, began alternating rocket and cannon passes at the Ministry of Defence. The action was led by Ba‘thī Flight Major Mundhir al-Wandāwī, whom Qāsim had a month before transferred to Baghdād, but who on the night of the seventh had slipped back to Ḥabbāniyyah and, with the aid of Staff Colonel ‘Āref ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq and other nationalists inside the base, laid hold of the Sixth Air Squadron.[2]

Even as bombs were falling on the Defence Ministry, “Nationalist Guardsmen” from al-A‘ḍhamiyyah, a reputed Ba‘thī safehold, appeared in strength outside the camp of ar-Rashīd. They were soon joined by elements of the Fourth Tank Regiment, which had earlier in the morning been seized at Abū Ghraib by the Ba‘thī officers of its Second Company–its Ba‘thī

commander, Staff Colonel Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī, having been pensioned off. Some of the armored cars inside ar-Rashīd attempted to break out, but in vain. About thirty Guardsmen were, however, killed. Not long afterwards, a group of retired officers, armed "with their high ranks" and headed by Major General Ṭāher Yaḥya, made their way into the camp and, according to the Communists,[3] "through promises and threats and by dint of military prestige" succeeded in obviating further resistance and taking control.

By that time another unit of the Fourth Tank Regiment, which included Colonel ʻAbd-us-Salām ʻĀref and Colonel Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, had already captured the Abū Ghraib radio transmitter, while a third detachment, led by Staff Colonel ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Muṣṭafa Naṣrat, was trundling toward the square outside the Ministry of Defence, where it was to be joined by the bulk of the "Nationalist Guard."

At 9:40, the "First Statement" of the leaders of the coup or, as they styled themselves, the "National Council of the Revolutionary Command," came over the air.[4] As almost everything else about the regime it heralded, the statement bore the imprint of insufficient care. Repetitive and loosely constructed, it announced that "with the help of God an end has been made of the regime of the enemy of the people ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Qāsim," and that the rising had been undertaken "to continue the triumphant march of the glorious July Fourteenth Revolution," and had to achieve "first, the national unity of the people [that is, the unity of the Iraqi people[5]] and, secondly, the participation of the masses in guiding and administering the government." This entailed "a strengthening of Arab-Kurdish brotherhood," "a respect for the rights of minorities," "an unleashing of public freedoms" and "support for the rule of law." The regime-to-be was also committed to "a policy of nonalignment" and to "the honoring of international treaties and obligations." Interestingly enough, apart from a reference to the cutting off of Iraq under Qāsim "from the procession of liberated Arabism," the statement was permeated by the terminology of the Iraqists rather than by that of its pan-Arab authors. This clearly aimed not only at propitiating the Kurds, whose leaders had been already won over to the coup, but also at neutralizing the elements in the army which, while non-Qāsimite, formed part of the particularist trend.[6]

Not long after reading the “First Statement,” the radio announcer gave, in a voice hoarse with emotion, the “good news” that the “tyrant” and “criminal traiter” had been killed at the hand of the officers and men of the Defence Ministry close upon the destruction of his “den” by the “eagles of the air force.”[7]

But there was nothing in it. Qāsim had been at his mother’s house, and the television station was soon transmitting sequences showing the “good son of the people” very much alive and being wildly acclaimed in ar-Rashīd Street by the Communists and the humbler classes of Baghdād. Anon, however, the station suddenly went dead.

At around 10:30, Qāsim arrived at the Ministry of Defence, and whilst outside excited crowds were clamoring for arms and chanting in cadence “There is no *za’īm*[leader] other than Karīm,” he settled down to weigh with his closest lieutenants[8] the means by which he could turn the tables upon his enemies. Communist-inclined Brigadier Ṭaha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad, the director of military planning, pointed out that in most of the units the officers and soldiers were hesitating, and that resolute swiftness was all. Instead of shutting themselves up in the compound of the Ministry of Defence and awaiting their chance, he said, they should lead out the well-equipped force which was at their command and try that chance in a bold onslaught on the positions and headquarters of the rebellion. The very strength of the compound, he added, “is the trap in which we will be caught.” He also pressed for the giving out of light weapons and ammunition to the assembled crowds. But the ideas of ash-Shaikh Aḥmad did not commend themselves to Qāsim, who, for the time being, opted for an essentially defensive line of action.[9]

The seething people in the square outside the ministry and the multitude that cheered Qāsim in ar-Rashīd Street had come out in response to an appeal by the Communists upon whom, as upon Qāsim, the coup had burst like a thunderclap, despite the forewarning that they themselves had given in January. When the bombs began falling on the Rashīd air base, their first secretary, Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, was in a house in Camp Sārah, a quarter neighboring the district of Eastern Karrādah. Thither, upon summons by telephone, repaired in great hurry several members of the Central Committee and of the Baghdād Local Committee.[10] They had instinctively perceived the peril to their party. In the pass to which matters had come, the

fall of Qāsim could only signify a free charter for their enemies and an unbridling of all the anti-Communist passions. Ar-Raḍī pointed out what he thought to be the only way open to them: armed resistance. This was, in any event, the course laid out in the party's standing "Emergency Plan."[11] Hastily ar-Raḍī penned a proclamation, which soon after 10:00 was being placarded on the walls, or distributed by hand, or read by the party's orators. The proclamation was in a relentless and feverish vein:

> To Arms! Crush the Reactionary Imperialist Conspiracy!
> Citizens! Masses of our great struggling people! Workers, peasants, intellectuals, and all other patriots and democrats!
> A worthless band of reactionary and conspiratorial officers have made a desperate attempt to seize the power in preparation for the putting of our country back into the grip of imperialism and reaction. Having taken control of the radio transmitter at Abū Ghraib and bent on achieving their contemptible end, they are now trying to provoke a massacre among the sons of our brave army. . . .
> Masses of our proud struggling people! To the streets!
> Sweep our country clean of the traiters!
> To arms in defense of our national independence and the gains of our people!
> Form defense committees in every military camp, every institution, every quarter, and in every village. . . .
> The people, led by the democratic forces, will inflict shame and defeat upon this vile conspiracy as they had done upon the plots of al-Gailānī, ash-Shawwāf, and others.
> We demand arms from the government!
> Forward! To the streets! Crush the conspiracy and the conspirators![12]

No mention was made of Qāsim because of the feeling that had developed against him within the party, and to which ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʻīl had given voice only a few weeks before at a meeting of the Central Committee. "For how long," he had asked, "will we go on bearing this man on our shoulders?"[13] But the populace was still attached to Qāsim, and the old shouts for him were already reechoing in the streets of Baghdād.

The proclamation had scarcely been out when thousands of *Shargāwiyyas* began moving toward the Ministry of Defence and the main thoroughfares from *Ath-Thawrah* town and the mud huts east of the Tigris River flood dike. An hour or so later, tanks of the Fourth Regiment would occupy the embankment and check the flow of people which, in the meantime, continued. Simultaneously and in the same directions, poured workmen, porters, and artisans from the quarters bordering al-Kifāḥ (old Ghāzī) Street, and especially from ‘Aqd al-Akrād. Waving the absurdest of weapons–mostly canes (Qāsim would to the end refuse to give them firearms)–they had the tragic appearance of sheep rushing forth high-spiritedly to the shambles. With Muḥammad Shkhaytem,[14] a member of the Military Section of the Communist party, at their head, the bulk of these crowds formed the outer resistance ring around the Ministry of Defence, while the rest clogged the bridges and principal streets, hampering the advance of Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Muṣṭafa Naṣrat’s tanks and of the Nationalist Guardsmen streaming out of al-A‘ḍhamiyyah.

Meanwhile, on the other side of Baghdād, in al-Karkh, the mudhutters of ash-Shākiriyyah and the capital’s poorest bakers, fishermen, and vegetable sellers from the Kraimāt and Shawwākah districts, led also by Communists–Bilāl ‘Alī Ṣabḥah, a member of the Military Section; Mattī Hindī Hindū, the *mas‘ūl* of the Eastern Karrādah party zone; and Layla ar-Rūmī, a member of the Baghdād Local Committee[15]–tried to rush Broadcasting House in aṣ-Ṣālḥiyyah, to which the “National Council of the Revolutionary Command” had just moved, but were thrown back with heavy losses by a unit of the Fourth Tank Regiment.

However, in al-Kāḍhimiyyah the Communists and their supporters under the command of Hadī Hāshim al-A‘ḍhamī, a member of the party secretariat; Retired Lieutenant Colonel Khaz’al Aiī as-Sa‘dī, a member of the Military Section of the party; and Ḥamdī Ayyūb al-‘Ānī, a member of the Baghdād Committee, laid hold of the entire district after storming the local Directorate of Police and its arsenal and besieging the post of an-Najdah (Riot) Squad.[16]

At around 11:15,[17] party First Secretary Ḥusain ar-Raḍī sent forth a second appeal. “Great People!” it read,

> the plotting traiters are surrounded in Abū Ghraib. Some bands are trying to widen their operations in certain areas on the Karkh side.
> The masses have the upper hand in all of Baghdād and the rest of the country.
> We call upon the people to attack and crush at once and without mercy the reactionary pockets. Our national independence . . . and the gains of the Revolution are in undoubted peril. . . .
> Lay hold of arms from police stations or any other place and attack the conspirators, the cat's-paws of the imperialists!
> They are trying to bomb from the air the cantonment of ar-Rashīd, the Ministry of Defence, and the other military camps which the masses of the soldiers and the loyal officers have under control.
> The leader ʻAbd-ul-Karīm, al-ʻAbdī, al-Mahdāwī, and the rest of the officers who are defending our national independence hold fast now to the command of the army. . . .
> Be firm and daring with a view to the safeguarding of independence. Exercise your democratic rights fully. The decrease of these rights gave the conspirators their opportunity.
> To arms! Take the offensive in every part of Baghdād and Iraq and crush the plotters, the agents of imperialism![18]

But the appeal could not blot out the course that events had been taking. The cantonment of ar-Rashīd had already fallen into the hands of the rebels. Besides, in contrast to the fierce resistance that the civilian component of the party was putting up, its military section remained relatively inert. According to a subsequent internal Communist circular, the party commanded the loyalty of "thousands of soldiers and officers," and "its forces inside the army, added to those of the middle-of-the-roaders, exceeded the forces of the putschists many times over." More than that, "the majority of the soldiers were against the coup and kept the portrait of Qāsim on their breast after his death and did not take it off except under threat." Nevertheless, "only in the camps of al-Washshāsh and as-Saʻd did some comrades undertake any initiative and on a very limited scale."[19] At as-Sa'd, which is about fifty kilometers to the northeast of Baghdād, two lieutenants, nineteen noncommissioned officers, and three privates seized in mid-morning the headquarters of the Third Division and distributed arms to

the Communists, only to be subdued after a brief fight. In al-Washshāsh, which is directly to the west of Baghdād, a Communist lieutenant rushed the stores of the Field Artillery Regiment and gave out ammunition to some of the soldiers, but to little purpose. In no other camp did the party's "Emergency Plan" go into effect. First Secretary ar-Raḍī himself had in 1962 compared the Communist organization in the army "to the revolver of one of the comrades which, being unoiled and uncleaned, had rusted and no longer fired."[20] The party had kept its hand on the trigger too long and when it finally pulled it, it didn't act.

In Baghdād, in the meantime, the going had become very rough for the party. Colonel Naṣrat's tanks, reaching the square outside the Ministry of Defence at about 11:30, effected a link-up with the Nationalist Guardsmen and proceeded to deal with the Communist-led crowds. In the words of the colonel, "the attacking force faced many difficulties in removing these people from its path and thrusting them from the Ministry of Defence. At first it tried by different means to pacify them . . . but in the end resorted to firmness and violence, sweeping them away."[21] Hundreds fell, including Muḥammad Shkhaytem and many other members of the Communist party.

At around two in the afternoon, however, the followers of the party in al-Kāḍhimiyyah captured the arsenal and post of an-Najdah Squad, after a four-hour battle in which they suffered heavy casualties and killed three policemen and wounded forty others.[22]

Scarcely a quarter of an hour afterwards, the Eighth Infantry Brigade, which, as preconcerted,[23] had been seized by nationalist officers at Ḥabbāniyyah, entered Baghdād. Its First and Second Battalions hurried to al-Kādhimiyyah, except for one company that moved to secure Broadcasting House. The Third Battalion advanced toward the Ministry of Defence.

At 3:00, the decisive trial of strength–the battle for Qāsim's headquarters–began. The support that airplanes and tanks now gave the rebels was invaluable, but the real fighting fell to the lot of their footmen commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Muḥammad Yūsuf Ṭaha. Of the original 1,500 men that Qāsim had under his hand within the compound of the Defence Ministry in the morning, only about 1,000 were still on their feet. The others had become casualties or, according to his enemies, had slipped away. As Qāsim was too favorably placed for an attack upon the

eastern wing of the ministry, the assailants concentrated on subduing first the western side, and merely engaged his attention elsewhere. But even here they found the going very rough and could not reach the Tigris until midnight. The trumpeting forth by Colonel Naṣrat at 5:30 in the evening that "all resistance has stopped"[24] was anticipatory. The defenders had risen to the height of their task, fighting furiously every inch of the ground. Reinforcements had yet to be called and a good deal of blood to be shed before the eastern wing could be reduced. The battle was over only at noon of the following day, February 9. Lieutenant Colonel Ṭaha later related that his men had to do the mopping up room by room, and at one point to bluff their way onward by shouting: "There is no *za'īm* other than Karīm!" He added that on examining Qāsim's papers after the capture of his office, he discovered that his salary was being regularly dispensed to certain needy families of Baghdād.[25]

Qāsim had in the evening of February 8 approached Colonel ʻĀref on the telephone, after hearing over the radio of his designation as provisional president of the Republic. "I am your brother," he reminded him, "and will never forget the bread and salt that we ate together." ʻĀref replied–and this is his own version of the conversation–that the question now was of "principles and the deliverance of the homeland" and that the Revolutionary Council had decided that he should surrender at the Main Gate of the Defence Ministry with uplifted hands and without his military insignia.

On the morning of the ninth in the neighborhood of 11:00, that is, one hour before the rage of the fight for the ministry was spent, Qāsim rephoned ʻĀref from the nearby People's Hall to which he and his aides had moved. This time–always according to ʻĀref–he pleaded for his life and for permission to leave the country. The dice, however, were heavily loaded against him. He was left with no choice but to surrender unconditionally.[26]

His arrest was effected at 12:30. With him were al-Mahdāwī, Ṭaha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad, and a junior aide. After a brief confrontation with the members of the Revolutionary Command Council, during which ʻĀref sought in vain to obtain an admission from him that ʻĀref alone had planned the July 14 coup, Qāsim and his three associates were given a drumhead trial and with deadly despatch sentenced to be shot by a firing squad. The sentence was carried out at 13.30.

Thus ended the career of “the enemy of the people,” to use the words in which moments later Baghdād Radio spread the news. Today not a few of those who stood against him at that hour admit privately that, far from accounting him their enemy, the men of the people had more genuine affection for him than for any other ruler in the modern history of Iraq.

The destruction of Qāsim tipped against the Communists the frightful balance of the scales. But they did not yet own themselves worsted. Only on the Karkh side did their resistance die away. In al-Kāḍhimiyyah, in ‘Aqd al-Akrād within Baghdād, and in the port of Baṣrah, the battle went on all through the day and night of February 9. The Communists fought as only men could fight who knew that no mercy was to be looked for in defeat. If they had had any illusions on that score, it was dissipated by Proclamation No. 13 issued by the Revolutionary Command Council at 8:20 in the evening of the eighth, and which read:

> In view of the desperate attempts of the agent-Communists–the partners in crime of the enemy of God[27] Qāsim–to sow confusion in the ranks of the people and their disregard of official orders and instructions, the commanders of the military units, the police, and the Nationalist Guard are authorized to annihilate anyone that disturbs the peace. The loyal sons of the people are called upon to cooperate with the authorities by informing against these criminals and exterminating them.[28]

But doubt of the issue had already entered the minds of the mass of sympathizers that had rallied to the Communists. Their auxiliary ranks had, in fact, been thinning out. Thus in ‘Aqd al-Akrād the resisting force amounted at the height of the struggle on February 8 to close upon 4,000, but by the afternoon of the ninth it had dwindled to some 1,500, and in the morning of the tenth counted only about 500, all now members or close supporters of the Communist party. Their leader, Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-‘Aballī, one of the party’s secretaries, surveying the situation at noon, finally admitted that ‘Aqd al-Akrād had not the power to shape the fate of Baghdād, and that the really important thing was to save the party and its cadre and thus, after a delaying action to permit the withdrawal of party

members, brought the organized resistance in this district to an end. The defenders at al-Kāḍhimiyyah came to an identical conclusion at eight in the evening of that same day. In Baṣrah, however, the Communists, who had at one point possessed themselves of key government buildings, held out in a number of workers' sections until sunset of 12 February.[29]

It is noteworthy that all the districts that offered resistance to the Ba'thī coup–ath-Thawrah town, ash-Shawwākah, al-Kreimāt, ash-Shākiriyyah, al-Kāḍhimiyyah, and 'Aqd al-Akrād–were without exception Shī'ī, the last being inhabited by Shī'ī Fuwailī Kurds, the others by Shī'ī Arabs. But it would not be proper on this account to leap to the conclusion that the sectarian factor imparted form or direction to the struggle, or played a crucial causative role. To begin with, the poorest of the poor of Baghdād lived in the districts referred to. In the extensive town of al-Kāḍhimiyyah, which embraced Shī'īs from other ranks, armed opposition was confined to al-Bahiyyah, a quarter inhabited by textile workers, to ash-Shu'lah, an abode of mud-hutters, and to the Secondary School in al-Muḥīṭ Street–also known as Moscow Street–which was manned by Communist students and workmen. Moreover, a sectarian explanation comes up against three other facts. In the first place, at this point–but not after 1963–the majority of the command of the Ba'th Party in Iraq–five out of eight members (see Table 52-1)–were Shī'ī. In the second place, by reason of the "Black Terror"[30] and the tendency of the Ba'thists in the preceding few years to turn the areas in which they predominated into "closed" party districts, a good many of the Arab Sunnīs who were Communist or sympathetic to the Communists had sought safety in the poorest sections of the city, where the position of their own party was unassailable. To these same sections hastened still more Communist Sunnīs, especially from the poor Sunnī districts of al-Faḍ1 and Qambar 'Alī, with the raising of the Ba'thī standard of revolt. Thus, although the resistance took place in Shī'ī country, the resisting force itself was composed of both Shī'īs and Sunnīs. Finally, it is indubitable that the initiative and guidance were throughout provided by the Communist party. The interesting thing in this connection is that the principal figures in the actual fighting were, as indicated in Table 53-1, Arab Sunnī in their majority. First Secretary Ḥusain ar-Raḍī was, however, a Shī'ī. Nevertheless, when all is said, it cannot but be admitted that no Sunnī neighborhood stood in the face of the Ba'thī coup or on the side of the

Communists. Part of the explanation for this lies in the fact that Arab Sunnīs, being a minority in Iraq, are in the mass more pan-Arab oriented than other segments of the population. But it must also be remembered that the sectarian division in Baghdād, as elsewhere in the south of the country, hides beneath it an economic division. Shī‘īsm, in other words, has here for long been by and large the ideology of the underdogs, just as Sunnīsm that of the socially dominant classes. This is not to say that there are or were no rich Shī‘īs or poor Sunnīs, or to deny that the Shī‘īs that waxed rich retained the psychology of the unprivileged, or that the poor Sunnīs could more easily than the poor Shī‘īs set the law to work in their favor. In any case, the point at issue was to show that the picture was much less simple than a purely sectarian interpretation would suppose.

TABLE 53-1

On-Scene Communist Leaders of the Resistance in Greater Baghdād, 8-10 February 1963

Resisting district	*Name of on-scene leaders*	*Position in the party*	*Place of birth*	*Sect and ethnic origin*	*Father's occupation*
Square outside the Ministry of Defence[a]	Muḥammad Shkhaytem	Member, Military Section	Mosul	Sunnī Arab	Butcher
Al-Kāḍhimiyyah	Hādī Hāshim al-A‘dhamī	Party secretary	Al-A‘ḍhamiyyah	Sunnī Arab	Petty government official
	Ḥamdī Ayyūb al-‘Ānī	Member, Baghdād Committee	‘Ānah	Sunnī Arab	
	Retired Lt. Col. Khaz‘al ‘Alī as-Sa‘dī	Member, Military Section	Baghdād	Shī‘ī Arab	Tradesman
‘Aqd al-Akrād	Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-‘Aballī	Party secretary	Baghdād	Sunnī Arab	Peasant
	Bāsim Mushtāq	Member, Baghdād Committee	Baghdād	Sunnī Arabized Turk	Higher government official; Director, Arab Bank (1945-1958); Ambassador to Turkey (1958-1964)
	Karīm al-Ḥakīm	Member, Baghdād Committee	Ba‘qūbah	Sunnī Arab	Schoolteacher
	Laṭīf al-Ḥājj ‘Alī Ḥaidar	Member, Military Section	Baghdād	Shī‘ī Arabized Fuwaili Kurd	Porter
Al-Kreimāt, ash-Shawwākah, & ash-Shākiriyyah[b]	Layla Ar-Rūmī	Member, Baghdād Committee	Mosul	Sunnī Arab	Religious shaikh
	Mattī Hindī Hindū	*Mas'ūl*,[c] Eastern Karrādah Party Zone	Mosul	Christian Orthodox Arab	Wealthy merchant
	Bilāl ‘Alī Ṣabḥah	Member, Military Section	Mosul	Sunnī Arab	Sheep merchant (killed British consul in Mosul in 1939)

[a]A large part of the crowds that assembled in the square came from ath-Thawrah town and the mud huts east of the Tigris River flood dike, and from ‘Aqd al-Akrād and Eastern Karrādah.

[b]The three quarters are contiguous to one another.

[c]I.e., comrade-in-charge.

On the reckoning of the Communists, no fewer than 5,000 “citizens” were killed in the fighting from 8 to 10 February, and in the relentless

house-to-house hunt for Communists that immediately followed.[31] Ba‘thists put the losses of their own party at around 80.[32] A source in the First Branch of Iraq’s Directorate of Security told this writer in 1967 that some 340 Communists died at the time. A well-placed foreign diplomatic observer, who does not wish to be identified, set the total death toll in the neighborhood of 1,500. The figure includes the more than one hundred soldiers who fell inside the Ministry of Defence and “a good lot of Communists.”

At any rate, the wound to the Communist party was severe and, insofar as its members were concerned, proved to be only the prelude of a seemingly unending year of horror. The new rulers had a past score to settle and, in their revengeful ardor, went to unfortunate extremes. The districts that had risen against them were treated as enemy country. Nationalist Guardsmen and units of the armed forces spread through them combing houses and mud huts. Upon the slightest resistance or on a mere suspicion of an intent to resist, Communists–real or hypothetical–were felled out of hand. The number of those seized so taxed the existing prisons that sport clubs, movie theaters, private houses, an-Nihāyah Palace and, in the first days, even a section of Kifāḥ Street, were turned into places of confinement. The arrests were made in accordance with lists prepared beforehand. It cannot be unerringly established where these lists came from or who compiled them, but in this connection something that King Ḥusain of Jordan affirmed seven months later in a tête-a-tête with Muḥammad Ḥasanein Haikal, chief editor of *Al-Ahrām*, at the Hotel Crillon in Paris, is well worth quoting:

> You tell me that American Intelligence was behind the 1957 events in Jordan. Permit me to tell you that I know for a certainty that what happened in Iraq on 8 February had the support of American Intelligence. Some of those who now rule in Baghdād do not know of this thing but I am aware of the truth. Numerous meetings were held between the Ba‘th party and American Intelligence, the more important in Kuwait. Do you know that . . . on 8 February a secret radio beamed to Iraq was supplying the men who pulled the coup with the names and addresses of the Communists there so that they could be arrested and executed? [33]

It is not clear what prompted Ḥusain to say these things. He had, of course, never been a friend of the Ba‘th party. But his observations should be read in the light of the recent revelation that he has been since 1957 in the pay of the C.I.A.[34] It is perhaps pertinent to add that a member of the 1963 Iraqi Ba‘th Command, who asked anonymity, asserted in a conversation with this writer that the Yugoslav embassy in Beirut had warned certain Ba‘thī leaders that some Iraqi Ba‘thists were maintaining surreptitious contacts with representatives of American power. The majority of the command in Iraq was, it would appear, unaware of what was said to have gone on. Be that as it may, it is necessary, in the interest of truth, to bring out that, insofar as the names and addresses of Communists are concerned, the Ba‘thists had had ample opportunity to gather such particulars in 1958-1959, when the Communists came wholly into the open, and earlier, during the Front of National Union years–1957-1958–when they had frequent dealings with them on all levels. Besides, the lists in question proved to be in part out of date. They at least did not lead the Ba‘th immediately to the Communists of senior standing. Some of the latter were, anyhow, out of the country. ‘Abd-us-Salām an-Nāṣirī[35] was in Moscow on an undisclosed mission, ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj[36] in Prague on the staff of the *World Marxist Review*. Zakī Khairī had been in People’s China and, returning at this juncture, sought refuge with Tūdeh. ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah lived in exile in Bulgaria, by order of the party. Bahā’u-d-Dīn Nūrī was recuperating from an illness somewhere in Eastern Europe. Other Communist leaders had slipped into Kurdistan or had changed their addresses. However, Ḥamdī Ayyūb al-‘Anī, a member of the Baghdād Local Committee, fell into the net that the Ba‘th had cast. Losing courage under examination, he gave away party secretary Hādī Hāshim al-A‘ḍhamī, from whose lips more secrets were forced, but only after he had been laid limp with a broken back. Ultimately, on 20 February, First Secretary Ḥusain ar-Raḍī himself was taken. Although various means were employed to make him speak, he did not yield. Four days later he died under torture. When eventually the new government gave official notice of his death, it circumstanced the facts after its own manner: on 9 March it announced that ar-Raḍī, together with Muḥammad Ḥusain Abū-l-‘Īss,[37] an ex-member of the Politbureau, and Ḥasan ‘Uwainah, a worker and a liaison member of the Central Committee, had been condemned on the fifth to be hanged until they were dead for bearing arms

“in the face of authority” and inciting “anarchist elements to resist the revolution,” and that the sentences had been carried out on the morning of the seventh.[38]

One adversity after another now pounded the party. It was the 1949 ordeal reenacted, but on a wider and more intense scale. The hurt to the cadre went this time very deep. Not a single organization in the Arab part of Iraq remained intact. Violence was perpetrated even upon the women. Executions by summary judgment grew rife. Sympathizers were paralyzed by despondency. The influence of fear became extreme.[39] And once again–as in 1949–the sands of the party’s life seemed to be running out.

This condition of things continued in one degree or another throughout the months that the Ba‘thists held power. The latter did not go for half measures, hoping that they would overcome the Communists once and for all, or persuading themselves that they were only paying them wages long overdue and were, therefore, fully justified of their deeds. There was in April, however, some letup in the repression. The Communists who escaped arrest had by then vanished from sight. Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī and Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-‘Aballī,[40] the two members of the Polit-bureau who succeeded to the direct leadership of the party, had concentrated their vision wholly on one vital point: the saving of as many Communists as possible and their withdrawal from Baghdād and other towns into rural Iraq, and more particularly into the Kurdish country. The fight against the Ba‘th was confined to polemics, and in this form was conducted entirely from abroad–by “The Voice of the Iraqi People,” which apparently had its studios in Leipzig and East Berlin and its transmitter in Bulgaria, and by the “Higher Committee of the Movement Abroad for the Defence of the Iraqi People,” which was founded in Prague on 22 March and was headed by the poet Muḥammad Mahdī aj-Jawāhirī.[41]

However, the falling out of the Ba‘th with the Iraqi Nāṣirites in May and with Nāṣir himself in July, and the resumption on June 10 of the Kurdish war, which had been interrupted upon the fall of Qāsim, greatly heightened the Ba‘thists’ sense of isolation, and thereby the insecurity in which they now lived, which disposed them to be even more violent toward their enemies. Thus when the Communists, recovering in some measure their spirits, renewed on June 11 their resistance to Ba‘thī power and openly took sides with the Kurds;[42] and when, furthermore, some 150 to 200

Communist-inclined soldiers and noncommissioned officers attempted on July 3 to seize the most sensitive of Iraq's military camps–that of ar-Rashīd–and to storm the camp's Prison No. 1, which held Communist civilians and army officers, and succeeded in detaining briefly Ḥāzem Jawād, the minister of interior, Ṭāleb Shabīb, the minister for foreign affairs, and Flight Lieutenant Colonel Munḍhir al-Wandāwī, the commander of the Nationalist Guard, who had gone to the camp to negotiate,[43] the Ba'thists reacted by resorting to fresh excesses. The soldiers involved in ar-Rashīd incident did not belong to the Communist party proper, but to an independent *ad hoc* Communist organization, the Revolutionary Committee, headed by Muḥammad Ḥabīb, nicknamed "Abū Salām," a coffee-house attendant. This did not, however, mitigate the case against Politbureau members Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī and Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-'Aballī, who shortly afterwards were made prisoners and on July 21 put to death.

The oppression of which the Communists were the victims was once again in full swing. Only the fall of the Ba'th in November set a term to it. By that time, no fewer than 7,000 Communists were in the prisons,[44] but at an earlier point–in March–the number of those arrested had perhaps topped 10,000. Moreover, during the brief period of Ba'thī rule official announcements were made of the execution of 149 Communists (see Table 53-2). Reflective of the spirit in which the taking of life was regarded is the anecdote that Colonel Muḥammad 'Umrān, a Syrian member of the Ba'th Pan-Arab Command, related at the Extraordinary Syrian Regional Congress of the party in 1964. "After the Communist plot,"[45] he said, "one of the army officers was charged with the execution of twelve Communists but he declared in the presence of many people that he would only go to execute five hundred and would not stir for twelve."[46]

TABLE 53-2

Officially Announced Executions of Members or Supporters of the Communist party in 1963

Date	Details	Total
February 9	Brigadier Ṭaha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad, one-time supporter of party	1
February 11	Brigadier Dāūd aj-Janābī, Colonel Ḥusain Khaḍr ad-Dūrī, and Lt. Col. Ibrahīm Kāḍhim al-Musāwī—all Communists	3
March 7	First Secretary Ḥusain ar-Raḍī; Muḥammad Ḥusain Abū-l-'Īss, ex-member of Politbureau; and Ḥasan 'Uwainah, liaison officer attached to the Central Committee	3
March 11	2 lieutenants, 19 noncommissioned officers, 3 privates, and one civilian, for resisting the Ba'thī coup at Sa'd Camp—all Communists	25
May 26	Lt. Col. Khaz'al 'Alī as-Sa'dī, Lt. Col. Fāḍil al-Bayātī, 8 other officers, and one civilian for opposing the coup—all Communists	11
June 23	28 Communists for involvement in 1959 Kirkūk incidents	28
July 2	11 Communists for "anarchic acts" in 1959 in Mosul	11
July 3	3 Communists for participation in 1959 Mosul incidents	3
July 13	21 Communists, 13 of whom soldiers, for taking part in the killing of Col. Shawwāf or for other activities at Mosul in 1959	21
July 21	Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-'Aballī, Party secretary; Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī, member of Politbureau; and 'Abd-uj-Jabbār Wahbeh, a prominent Communist journalist	3
July 31	21 Communist soldiers and noncommissioned officers for their part in the July 3 rising at ar-Rashīd Camp	21
August 13	2 Communists for roles in 1959 Mosul events	2
September 3	15 Communists for "plotting" in Mosul	15
September	2 Communists for July 3 ar-Rashīd rising	2
Total		149[a]

[a]Twelve soldiers and one civilian were also sentenced in April for the Mosul incidents, but there was no official announcement of their execution.

The actual number of Communist prisoners who were deprived of life was much higher than the figure officially released. Thus no public notice was given of the death of Central Committee members 'Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf[47] and Ḥamzah Salmān aj-Jubūrī,[48] or of Nāfi' Yūnis,[49] the secretary of the Military Section of the party, or of Lieutenant Hishām Ismā'īl Ṣafwat, who had charge of the important Communist organization in the air force. Nor was an announcement made concerning Party Secretary George Tallū[50] who, weakening before his captors, was on the verge of a disclosure when he was shot by his own companion, 'Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf, with a revolver that the latter had somehow contrived to conceal in his clothes.[51] In

fact, more than one-third of the full members of the Central Committee–seven out of nineteen–were, in one way or another, done to death.

It subsequently came to knowledge that the Nationalist Guard's Bureau of Special Investigation had alone killed 104 persons, the bodies of 43 of whom were found in 1963-1964 buried in aj-Jazīrah and al-Ḥaṣwah districts, seventy kilometers to the south and sixty kilometers to the west of Baghdād, respectively.[52] In the cellars of an-Nihāyah Palace, which the Bureau used as its headquarters, were found all sorts of loathsome instruments of torture, including electric wires with pincers, pointed iron stakes on which prisoners were made to sit, and a machine which still bore traces of chopped-off fingers. Small heaps of blooded clothing were scattered about, and there were pools on the floor and stains over the walls.[53]

The excesses against the Communists did not fail to arouse dissent within the Ba'th party itself, which has always included many worthy and high-minded people. Some months before the fall of the regime, "rank-and-filers began," maintains a Ba'thī brochure, "to ask day after day: 'In whose interest is this policy?' "[54] Earlier, and on more than one occasion, Michel 'Aflaq, the founder and secretary general of the party, had taken pains to convey his disapproval. As he himself revealed at the 1964 Extraordinary Congress of the Syrian Ba'th:

> In May [1963] or before, I begged Comrade Ḥamdī[55] to go to Baghdād and awake fellow members there to the dangers of improvisation. At that time . . . the whole Communist camp stood against us. . . . I, therefore, urged him to ask the brothers in Iraq, in view of the course they had been steering, what had become of positive neutrality. Comrade Ḥamdī is aware that I constantly warned against a policy of bloodshed and torture, whomsoever might be its victims, for our differences with the Communists cannot possibly justify such means. The revolution had in its first months a legitimate right to defend itself against those who opposed it by force of arms but afterwards when no month or weeks passed without our hearing or reading of the execution of tens of men, I told Comrade Ḥamdī that this course brought great harm. He went to Baghdād and returned but to little purpose. It may be said that the nonparty elements in the regime[56] encouraged this policy,

> which is true, but how can the Ba‘th shoulder the responsibility of the revolution and of government in an Arab country if it can be manipulated by rightist elements with such ease? Was it permissible to give the reins to nonparty or poorly conscious elements, to elements who, being out to win the favor of the right, had a basic interest in the killing of Communists or elements whose understanding or education urged them to such a course and were unmindful of its harm and dangers to the country? In the end it is the party that is held to account before public opinion at home and abroad.[57]

It is necessary to add that in 1961-1963 the supporters of the Ba‘th in Iraq increased so greatly and so swiftly that the command could have had at best only an incomplete idea of the type of people it was leading. Some non-Ba‘thī or nominal Ba‘thī army officers of rightist leanings may have also pressed for an extreme anti-Communist line. On the other hand, it is doubtful, to say the least, that such old Ba‘this as Flight Lt. Col. Munḍhir al-Wandāwī, the commandant of the Nationalist Guard, or ‘Ammār ‘Alwash, the head of the Guard’s Bureau of Special Investigation, or the Iraqi Ba‘th Command Secretary ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī himself could escape responsibility for the brutalities that were committed.

Years later, after the Communists had had time to heal their wounds, the question would be raised within the party whether it was not folly and bad leadership that had brought them into so disastrous a pass. “Right-wingers,” led by ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah and Bahā’-ud-Dīn Nūrī, would brand the armed resistance to which the party and its masses were summoned on 8 February 1963 as an “adventure” that led only to a purposeless “massacre.” Such a course, they would maintain, made no sense in the light of the failure of the party leadership to provide weapons to its followers or to take measures for their safety. They would also feel that the Communists could not be absolved of responsibility for the introduction of violent means in the solution of political differences.[58] While admitting that the party did not arrange for the arming “even of its own cadres,” “left-wingers,” headed by ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj, would insist, on the other hand, that the resistance that the party put up aroused the “admiration” of the people and “raised their

morale," and "regained for the party the sympathy of some of the middle-of-the-roaders." Had no resistance whatever been offered, the loss in terms of prestige and popularity would have been incalculable. But the party had really no choice. No other course presented itself: "the February putschists were bent upon settling accounts with us . . . regardless of the attitude we adopted." They "knew only too well what great political force our party is and that to leave it intact would in itself constitute the greatest danger to them." "The Right . . . forgets that in 1949 a disaster, as wide in its sweep, overtook us, although at the time the party did not give a thought to armed resistance." But if no alternative path lay open, mistakes were, nonetheless, made that could have been avoided. One of the gravest was the failure to bring about a prompt withdrawal of the cadres into places of safety after 10 February, that is, after the resistance had come to an end in Baghdād. "The organizations were merely frozen in the usual manner"–a step scarcely "appropriate" when the party had to do with "a hostile and vicious regime." But "the chief factor" in the climax of ill fortune reached by the party was the line of "passive defence" that it had pursued in 1959-1963. In those years, "the whole strategy of our party rested on a wrong principle, namely, that, rather than initiating the civil war ourselves, we should avoid it at all costs. At the same time, the other forces . . . were sharpening their knives to massacre us at the most suitable moment. We abandoned, in other words, the initiative to the enemy, to the Counter-Revolution." The party had "thousands of soldiers and officers" inside the army, and a wide base of support among the masses, but four years of waiting were enough to spell the end of any "revolutionary political army," which "unlike a military army, cannot ever and again be set in motion at the beck and call of the commander-in-chief."

> The command of the military army holds the reins of military discipline which is marked by the force of habit. And this is a terrible force. At a signal, the troops move into action. . . . But the leader of the Revolution–the party–cannot at will call out the forces of the Revolution if they are not themselves impelled by a high insurrectionary temperament.

But on 8 February, insurrectionary feelings were “at a low ebb,” in part because of the continual harassment of the “revolutionary elements” in the army, but essentially by reason of the four years of Communist irresolution and “passive defense.”

> Had Lenin not committed his revolutionary political army in a decisive battle on 7 November 1917, had the summons to act been delayed only 24 hours, he might have lost that army[59] and the October Revolution might not have made history. As for us, we gave ourselves up to the delusion that we could preserve the mighty revolutionary army, which we built under the extraordinary revolutionary circumstances of 1958-1959, in a condition of passive defense or passive watchfulness indefinitely . . . thus disregarding the law of the Revolution formulated by Lenin: “Waiting means death”–that is, the death of the Revolution. . . . We had lost the battle of 8 February 1963 since the year 1959![60]

That the defeat of the party in 1963 is essentially traceable to its retreat in 1959 is no doubt true, but that the retreat in 1959 was a political mistake is not so obvious. For in 1959 as in 1963, though at the one point the party was surging upwards and at the other going down, things were for it intrinsically difficult. Then, too, the party does not appear to have had much of a choice, if only because of the world distribution of forces and its own international links. Indeed, by virtue of an inherent conflict between the demands of its internal situation and the consequences of its external commitments, the party seems to be caught in a sort of fatality that enhances its liability to disaster.

If, given the whole previous sequence of circumstances, the defeat of 1963 was, in all probability, unavoidable, could the extreme violence that attended the defeat have been obviated? It is, of course, possible that the reaction of the Ba‘thists might not have been as fierce, had the Communists been “prudent” or, if one prefers, “timid,” and offered no resistance on the day of the coup. But in truth the violence of 1963 is largely explicable by the violence of 1959 which, on a close reading of history, certainly did not mark a new departure in the political life of Iraq. For isn’t the violence of 1959 explained to no little degree by, for example, the violence in the

royalist prisons in 1953,[61] or by the previous tribal, racial, interquarter, and family violence and feuds in Mosul or Kirkūk, and these by still earlier violence? Evidently the chain of causation here is infinite. And if one is inclined to attribute the violence, at least in part, to doctrinal influences, then one would have also to explain how these doctrines happened to arise, and why minds or masses of people came to be susceptible to them, in both the immediate Iraqi and the more distant and wider contexts. Clearly there is no end to this sort of enquiry. Indeed, when one takes the long view of things, one finds it increasingly difficult to blame or condemn, for more often than not political forces get entangled in complicated series of causes which they themselves did not set in motion, and which are largely beyond their power to master.

54

THE COMPOSITION AND ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY (1955-1963)

The most salient change in the composition of the Central Committees in the years 1955-1963 was the sharp rise in the numerical weight of the Sunnī Arabs. Their proportion, which had fallen as low as 15.6 percent in 1949-1955, shot up in this period to 37.3 percent. In other words, they were now at the command level as strong arithmetically as in the time of Fahd, that is, as in 1941-1948 (compare Table 54-1 with Table 35-1). The change appears to be, to some extent, a corollary of the Arabization of the party line in 1955 and, in a greater degree, a consequence of the return to the fold in 1956 of the overwhelmingly Arab Sunnī faction of the Unity of the Communists. There may have been also some link between this development and the towering importance in 1958-1961 of ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah, an Arab Sunnī. This should not necessarily be taken to mean that ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah was still under the influence of the sectarian principle, or that he may have found it politically expedient to push for the advancement of men from his own denomination. There is no evidence for this at all. A localistic tendency may simply have been here at work, perhaps consciously, perhaps in an entirely natural manner: of the twenty-two members of the Central Committee, that led the Communists in the days of the flood-tide, no fewer than five–ʻAzīz Sharīf, the *masʻūl* of the Peace Partisans; ʻAzīz ash-Shaikh, the *masʻūl* of the Central Party Zone; ʻAbd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf, the *masʻūl* of the party's Education Bureau and Economic Committee; Sharīf ash-Shaikh, the *masʻūl* of Relations with National Parties; and ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah himself[1]–were from the Arab Sunnī townlet of ʻĀnah. But again, it is not known whether any of these men owed his position to ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah. We may have in this case no more than another illustration of the famed ability

of ‘Ānites to come to the front or, at least, to make themselves strongly felt in whatever field of life they happen to enter. In the period being discussed, Staff Brigadier Jalāl al-Awqātī, the commander of the air force; ‘Alī Shukur, the president of the Federation of Labor Unions; Tawfīq Munīr, the vice-president of the Peace Partisans’ Movement; Colonel Engineer Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, the secretary of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers; Staff Lieutenant Colonel Muḥammad Majīd, a member of the Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers; and Ḥamdī ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, a member of the Regional and Pan-Arab Ba‘th Commands, were all by birth or by origin from ‘Ānah. So were also on their mother’s side the brothers ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref and ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref. The remarkable energy and persistence of the ‘Ānites and their urge for achievement can be explained from their social circumstances. Theirs has been a very harsh and niggardly environment. Their town, whose history goes back to the eighteenth century B.C., to the days of Ḥammurābī, one of the greatest kings of Babylon–its name then was Hana–struggles along about twelve miles of the west bank of the Euphrates and has almost no depth, confined, as it is, by the cliffs of the desert that rise above it. Its cultivable land is so scarce that the inhabitants have been driven to plant date-gardens or *ḥuwaiqas*, as they are locally called, in the midst of the river. ‘Ānah had known happier times before the turn of this century. It was, as ‘Ānites say, the “flower” of ar-Ramādī province, and counted, not a mere 12,000 as at present, but between 30,000 and 40,000 people. Not only did it act as a commercial link between aj-Jazīrah and the Syrian Desert, but also specialized in the production of *‘abā’as*–Arab woollen cloaks. However, the penetration of Iraq’s markets by the goods of Manchester and the founding of modern weaving and spinning mills in Baghdād affected adversely ‘Ānah’s handicraft industry, and gradually forced the majority of its inhabitants to migrate 210 miles to the southeast, to Baghdād, where the bulk of them or of their descendants now live on the Karkh side and the rest in the quarter of Banī Sa‘īd in ar-Raṣāfah. Clearly these factors have as much to do with the strong fiber as with the revolutionary tendencies of at least some of Baghdād’s ‘Ānites.

TABLE 54-1

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to Members of the Central Committees of the Communist Party June 1955 to February 1963

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	No. of members	%	*No. of individuals*[a]	%	*Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq*
Moslems					
Shī'ī Arabs	25	33.4	12	33.3	44.9
Sunnī Arabs	28[b]	37.3	12[c]	33.3	28.6
Kurds	16[d]	21.3	9[e]	25.0	12.7
Turkomans	–	–	–	–	3.4
Persians	–	–	–	–	3.3
Jews	–	–	–	–	.3
Christians	6[f]	8.0	3[g]	8.4	6.4
Sabeans	–	–	–	–	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	–	–	.1
Total	75	100.0	36	100.0	100.0

Education

	No. of individuals[a]	%
Elementary	6	16.7
Secondary	13	36.1
College	16	44.4
No particulars	1	2.8
Total	36	100.0

Class Origin

	No. of members	%	*No. of individuals*[a]	%
Working class	10	13.3	5	13.9
Peasant Class	12	16.0	6	16.7
Lower middle class				
Sayyid families	20	26.7	8	22.2
Others	29	38.7	15	41.7
Upper impoverished *sayyid* class	4	5.3	2	5.5
Total	75	100.0	36	100.0

Sex

	No. of individuals[a]
Male	36
Female	–
Total	36

Occupation

	No. of individuals[a]	%
Ex-students	3	8.3
Members of professions	17	47.2
Lawyers 9		
Schoolteachers 6		
Engineer 1		
Surveyor 1		
Low grade white collar	5	13.9
Workers	6	16.7
Ex-army officer	1	2.8
Trading petty bourgeoisie	3	8.3
No information	1	2.8
Total	36	100.0

Age Group in Year of Accession to Committee

	No. of individuals[a]	%
25 years	1	2.8
26-30 years	7	19.5
31-35 years	11	30.6
36-40 years	7	19.5
41 years	2	5.5
47-49 years	2	5.5
52-54 years	2	5.5
No particulars	4	11.1
Total	36	100.0

Length of Association with Communist Movement in Year of Accession to Committee

No. of years	*No. of individuals*[a]	%
5 years	2	5.5
6 -10 years	7	19.5
11-15 years	15	41.7
16-18 years	6	16.7
30 years	2	5.5
No particulars	4	11.1
Total	36	100.0

[a]In this column, individuals who served on more than one central committee are counted only once.

[b]Including 2 of Arab-Indian parentage and 1 of Arab-Kurdish parentage.

[c]Including 1 Arab-Indian and 1 Arab-Kurd.

[d]Including 2 Failī Shī'ī Kurds.

[e]Including 1 Failī Shī'ī Kurd.

[f]1 Arabized Armenian, the others Arabized Chaldeans.

[g]1 Arabized Armenian, the others Arabized Chaldeans.

Sources: Based on Tables 36-1, 37-1, 37-2, 42-6, 42-7, 51-2, and 51-3.

The significance of the plurality of the Arab Sunnīs in the Central Committees of this period should not be exaggerated, for though the proportion of Arab Shī'īs at that level dropped from 46.9 percent in 1949-1955 to 33.4 percent in 1955-1963, and that of the Kurds from 31.3 percent to 21.3 percent (consult Tables 35-1 and 54-1), both groups continued to

play vital roles in the party. As was only natural, the Kurds held firmly in their hands throughout these years all the organizations of the Kurdish Branch. The Shī‘īs, for their part, occupied most of the crucial places in the party apparatus. Thus in the months when the Communists were at the pinnacle of their influence, Shī‘īs filled not only the office of the first secretary, but also the posts of the *mas‘ūls* of Baghdād, the Mid-Euphrates Party Zone, the Southern Party Zone, the Peasants' Bureau, and the Military Organization of the party.[2]

Except for the Christians, who had a part commensurate to their numbers in the population, the non-Moslem minorities remained of no importance in the Communist command structure.

A comparison of Table 54-1 with Tables 35-3 and A-21 would also show with clarity that the members of the Central Committees in this period were older and of longer standing in the Communist movement than at any previous stage in the history of the party. Thus now only 2.8 percent were under twenty-six years, and no fewer than 36 percent above thirty-five. The corresponding figures for 1949-1955 were 33.3 percent and 4.8 percent, and for 1941-1948 32.1 percent and 14.3 percent. Again, as many as 63.9 percent of the members had now a standing of more than ten years in the party. The analogous figure for Fahd's days was 10.7 percent,[3] and for 1949-1955 only 4.8 percent. The Communists had simply become an old party in the land of the Iraqis.

As at all earlier points, none of the members of the Central Committees in 1955-1963 worked on the soil. Sixteen percent, however, were peasants by extraction. This was a very slight advance on the years 1949-1955. In the same periods, the proportion of members who were workers by origin declined from 28.1 percent to 13.3 percent, and of those who were workers by occupation from 19 percent to 16.7 percent. No less meaningful was the reaffirmation by the members of the professions of their role, attaining in these years as high a percentage as 47.2.

Far more interesting is the fact that 32 percent of the entire membership of the Central Committees came from *sayyid* families (see Table 54-1), including, as has already been noted,[4] the top leaders themselves. This is a phenomenon that we meet also in other parties. Nowadays, for example, descent from the Prophet Muḥammad is claimed for Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, the chairman of the present Revolutionary Command Council, and for

Ṣaddām Ḥusain, its deputy chairman and the assistant secretary general of the Ba‘th Regional Command. Whether there are grounds for the claim or not is not as significant as the fact that it is put forward. At any rate, in the instance of most of the Communist leaders concerned, it is a question of descendants of *sayyids* from small provincial towns and from the lower middle or still poorer classes. The incidence of learning being greater among them than among the other strata of humble and discontented people, it is not at all strange that they should stand at their head, or that they should be among the leaders of the waves of revolution or unsettlement that have been lashing at Baghdād since 1958–in fact since World War II–and that have their roots, in part, in the disruption of the old local economies and the old rural social structures caused by the tying of Iraq to world markets. Indeed, the Iraqi Revolution is, in some of its aspects, a revolution of the country or the provinces against Iraq's chief city or against the metropolitan governing class, a class which has in effect, even if unconsciously, served as a kind of political wheel-greaser for the relentless forces of the advanced segments of the world economy: the Revolution, it will be remembered, has derived much of its energy from the elements of the population–Shargāwiyyas, ‘Ānites, Takrītīs, and so on–that have moved into Baghdād in the past four or five decades from badly affected tribal villages and provincial towns.

Of equal significance is the fact that not a few of the Communist leaders–often the same that descended from *sayyids*–were sons of non-Baghdādī men of religion. The father of Bahā-ud-Dīn Nūrī was a *mudarris*–teacher–in the Sah Raḥīmain Mosque in Sulaimāniyyah. The father of ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah was a *mu'azzin*– a caller to prayer–at the mosque in ‘Ānah. The father of ‘Azīz Sharīf and ‘Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf was a *khaṭīb*–preacher–in the same mosque. So was the father of Sharīf ash-Shaikh.[5] This sort of thing occurred, too, in the lower levels of the party. In Najaf, as has been indicated elsewhere,[6] many of the militant Communists were sons or relatives of *‘ulamā'*. Many of the same factors appear to have been operative here as in the case of the provincial town *sayyids:* a decline in the prestige or the political influence or the material situation of the men of religion, especially in the inferior ranks, due to the impingement upon the local existential structure of remote economic and political forces. The consequence of this was that their sons fulfilled a role not unanalogous to

that played in the nineteenth century by the sons of the lower clergy in the history of the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia.

In this period, the party underwent extremely sharp changes in membership, at first in an upward and then in a downward direction. On the Communists' own reckoning, it numbered only in the "several hundreds" on the eve of the 1958 Revolution.[7] This, by the way, suggests that the 507 members whose names were found in the party lists seized by the government in 1953-1954 and to whom ample attention has been given in an earlier chapter,[8] formed in all probability the actual total strength of the party at that time. However, by mid-1959, as noted elsewhere,[9] the membership had swollen to an estimated maximum of 20,000 to 25,000. In other words, it had increased perhaps as much as fifty-fold. But in the late summer of that year it fell off and, after a brief revival in the autumn and succeeding winter, went down further. By the beginning of 1963 it had declined to nearly 10,000. The most important of the party's organizations–that of Baghdād–counted apparently 139 members in 1954,[10] "between 8,000 and 10,000" in mid-1959, and "around 5,000" in February 1963,[11] excluding the members of the military and police organizations of Greater Baghdād, which came directly under the Military Committee of the Communist party attached to the Secretariat of the Central Committee.[12] Explanations for these acute shifts in the strength of the Communists have already been provided.[13]

At other points in this work some details have been furnished on one aspect or another of the party cadre or the membership at large. Other pertinent details can be found in Tables A-44 to A-48. Unfortunately, they are too fragmentary or too specific to permit any general conclusions. Table A-44, which shows the occupation of 1,146 militant Communists held in 1964 in the desert fortress of Nuqrat-us-Salmān, suggests that the soldiers, workers, officers, students, and members of professions formed the weightier components, and the tradesmen and peasants the components of least consequence in the cadre. Table A-45, relating to the Nāṣiriyyah organization in 1963, points toward the continued importance of the students in the party's rank and file. But, as could be inferred from Table A-46, relating to the Baghdād Organization in the same year, the incidence of membership among them was not, in relative terms, probably as high in the

capital as in the provinces. The statistics in Table A-47, referring to the college students' elections in November 1959, the freest held in the Qāsimite period, clearly indicate that the Communists were weakest in the Liberation (Women's) College and the College of Moslem Law; strongest in the various technical institutes and the Schools of Medicine, Dentistry, Agriculture, Education, and Commerce; and shared influence with the nationalists and conservatives in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and the Schools of Law and Engineering.

The enormous growth of the party induced, of necessity, a proliferation of cells and branches. The structure of the Baghdād organization, as it had developed by 1963, is shown in Table A-46, and that of one of the provincial organizations–Nāṣiriyyah's–in Table A-45. The tables are self-explanatory.

As many of the new members had little Communist education and, sometimes, scarcely any mental kinship with the party, the leadership faced great difficulties in bringing them under methodic control. It was in order to cope with this problem and widen the cadre and raise its caliber that a Central Organizational Committee was formed in the autumn of 1958. For the same reason, an accent was placed on the role of the Central Committee's Education or Training Bureau and its subsidiary organs.

To tighten further the hand of the command over the party, a liaison apparatus was created and attached to the party Secretariat. To this apparatus were linked directly the *mas'ūls* of the Workers' Bureau, the Peasants' Bureau, the Baghdād Committee, the Mosul Committee, the Kurdish Branch, the Southern Party Zone, the Central Party Zone, and the Mid-Euphrates Party Zone[14] as well as the *mas'ūls* of the party's press and the party's fractions in the auxiliary mass organizations–the Peace Partisans, the Students' Union, the Youth Federation, and so on.

In addition, for one purpose or another, a number of other bodies took shape, such as the Emergency Bureau, which was established in 1959 and devoted itself to the study of measures for countering attempts to overturn Qāsim; or the Committee for Democratic Guidance, which from its inception in 1961 sought to infuse a new life in the mass organizations that Qāsim had badly battered. An important committee, which may have been formed at an earlier stage in the history of the party, came now also to light:

the Committee for External Relations, that is, for relations with Communist parties abroad.

Otherwise, the structure of the party remained essentially the same as under Fahd, that is, it continued to rest on the occupational and territorial principles and to be dominated by vertical links and a thoroughgoing centralization.

55

THE FIRST BA‘THĪ REGIME, OR TOWARD ONE-PARTY RULE

After the fall of Qāsim, the Ba‘th party attained a great degree of authority. The crucial threads of government became almost entirely centered in its hands. It thus unambiguously dominated in the National Council of the Revolutionary Command, which constituted the core of real power in the new regime.[1] As is evident from Table 55-1, out of the eighteen men who composed the council, sixteen were Ba‘thists. Of these, ten, including ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī, the deputy premier and minister of interior; Staff Lieutenant General Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ‘Ammāsh, the minister of defence; Staff Lieutenant Colonel ‘Abd-us-Sattār ‘Abd-ul-Laṭīf, the minister of communications; Ḥāzem Jawād, the minister of state for presidential affairs; Ṭāleb Shabīb, the minister for foreign affairs; and Ḥamid Khalkhāl, the minister of labor; were party members of more than five years’ standing. Brigadier Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, the premier, was a relatively recent recruit: he enlisted in 1960. Nonetheless, he was generally regarded as the party’s central military figure. By contrast, Staff Major General Ṭaher Yaḥya, the chief of staff, who joined in 1962, was to all intents and purposes a chance Ba‘thist. This could not be said of the other new entrants–Staff Major Anwar ‘Abd-ul-Qāder al-Ḥadīthī, the secretary of the council; Air Staff Brigadier Ḥardān ‘Abd-ul-Ghaffār at-Takrītī, the commander of the Air force; and Staff Colonel Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī, the assistant chief of staff–who would in future years give proof of a steadier and more enduring commitment. The two members of the council who did not belong formally to the party were Staff Brigadier ‘Abd-ul-Ghanī ar-Rāwī and Staff Marshal ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref. Ar-Rāwī, who had on the day of the coup led the Eighth Infantry Brigade into Baghdād, and now commanded the Third Armored Division, was a pan-Moslem by sympathy. ‘Āref inclined as ever to the side of Nāṣir, but at the same time

was on the best of terms with the Ba‘thists who, availing themselves of his wide repute, elevated him to the presidency of the Republic. To this office they attached a purely honorific significance, but it would be going too far to maintain on this account that ‘Āref was a mere ornament, if only because of the support he still enjoyed in the army. ‘Āref had also grown in maturity and become more supple in his ideas, and of greater skill in adapting his conduct to the necessities of the hour.

TABLE 55-1

The National Council of the Revolutionary Command, February to November 1963

Name	Position in the government, party, or armed forces
Civilian Members	
ʿAlī Ṣāleḥ as-Saʿdī[a,b]	Deputy premier (February 8-November 11); minister of interior (February 8-May 11); minister of guidance (May 13-November 11); secretary of the Baʿth Regional Command (till September 26); member of the Baʿth National (i.e., over-all) Command (till November 11); member of the Baʿth Military Bureau (February-November 11)
Ḥāzem Jawād[b]	Minister of state (February 8-May 11); minister of interior and for presidential affairs (May 13-November 13); member of the Baʿth Regional Command (till November 13); member of the Baʿth National Command (till October 26); member of the Baʿth Military Bureau (February-November 13)
Ṭālib Shabīb[b]	Minister for foreign affairs (February 8-November 13); member of the Baʿth Regional Command (till September 26); member of the Baʿth National Command (till October 26); member of the Baʿth Military Bureau (February-September 26)
Ḥamdī ʿAbd-ul-Majīd[a,b]	Member of the Baʿth Regional Command (till September 26); secretary of the Baʿth Regional Command (September 26-November 11); member of the Baʿth National Command (till November 11); minister of labor and social affairs (October 7-November 11)
Karīm Shintāf[b]	Member of Baʿth Regional Command (till November 13); editor-in-chief of *Aj-Jumhūriyyah* (till November 13)
Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rādī[a,b]	Member of Baʿth Regional Command (till November 11); member of Baʿth National Command (October 26-November 11)
Ḥamīd Khalkhāla[a,b]	Minister of labor and social affairs (February 8-October 6); minister of public works and housing (October 7-November 17); member of Baʿth Regional Command (till September 26
Hānī al-Fkaikī[a,b,c]	Member of Baʿth Regional Command (September 26-November 11)
Military Members	
Staff Marshal ʿAbd-us-Salām ʿAref[d]	President of the Republic; independent nationalist of Nāṣirite leanings and at first a friend of the Baʿth
Brigadier Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr[e]	Premier (February 8-November 17); member of Baʿth Military Bureau (to this date); member of Baʿth Regional Command (September 26 to this date); member of Baʿth National Command (October 26 to this date); a Baʿthī since 1960
Staff Lieutenant General Ṣāliḥ Mahdī ʿAmmāsh[b]	Minister of defence (February 8-November 17); member of Baʿth Military Bureau (till November 17); member of Baʿth National Command (October 26-November 17); a Baʿthī since 1952
Staff Lieutenant Colonel ʿAbd-us-Sattār ʿAbdul-Laṭīf[b]	Minister of communications (February 8-November 17); member of Baʿth Military Bureau (till ?); a Baʿthī since the mid-fifties

Nation and sect	*Date and place of birth*	*Class origin*	*Prior political activity*
	(See Table 52-1)		
	(See Table 52-1)		
	(See Table 52-1)		
	(See Table 52-1)		
	(See Table 52-1)		
	(See Table 52-1)		
	(See Table 52-1)		
Arab, Shī'ī (mother: Sunnī)	1936, Baghdād	Lower professional middle class; son of a lawyer	Member of Peace Partisans Movement 1951-1954.
Arab, Sunnī	1921, Baghdād; originally from the neighborhood of Sumaichah, ar-Ramādī prov.	Trading lower middle class; son of a draper	See Tables 41-2 and 42-2.
Arab, Sunnī	1914, Takrīt	Petty landowning class; son of a landed notable of al-Begāt, a tribal group in Takrīt	Member of the Free Officers' Movement; attempted a coup against Qāsim in September 1958.
Arab, Sunnī	1925, Baghdād	Lower agricultural entrepreneurial class; son of a peasant-*ḍammān*[f]	Member of the Free Officers' Movement.
Arab, Sunnī	1926, al-A'ḍhamiyyah	Class of middling civil servants; son of a civil official at the Ministry of Defence	Member of the Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers: see Table 41-4.

Name	Position in the government, party or armed forces
Staff Major General Ṭaher Yaḥyag	Chief of the General Staff (February 8-November 17); nominal Ba'thī since 1962
Staff Colonel 'Abd-ul-Karīm Muṣṭafa Naṣrat[a,e]	Commander of the National Guard (February 8-February 16); commander of the 4th Armored Division (February 16-November 17); a Ba'thī from the late fifties
Staff Brigadier 'Abd-ul-Ghanī ar-Rāwī[d]	Commander of the armed forces in ar-Ramādī province (February 8-February 16); commander of the 3rd Armored Division (February 16-November 17); a friend of the Ba'th with strong pan-Islamic feelings
Staff Colonel Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī[a,e]	Director, Armored Corps (February); assistant chief of staff (March-November 17); a Ba'thī since 1960
Air Staff Brigadier Ḥardān 'Abd-ul-Ghaffār at-Takrītī[e,h]	Commander of the air force (February 28-November 17); a Ba'thī since 1961
Staff Major Anwar 'Abd-ul-Qāder al-Ḥadīthī[e]	Secretary of the National Council of the Revolutionary Command (February 8-November 17); a Ba'thī since 1960

Nation and sect	Date and place of birth	Class origin	Prior political activity
Arab, Sunnī	1914, Baghdād; originally from Takrīt	Trading lower middle class; son of an *'alawjī* (grain tradesman)	Member of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers 1956-1958.
Arab, Sunnī	1926, Baghdād	Military middle class; son of an Ottoman army officer	–
Arab, Sunnī	1924, Baghdād; originally from Rāwah	Middling religious stratum; son of a professor of Arabic and, in his later years, attorney-at-law	Member of the Free Officers' Movement.
Arab, Sunnī	1926, Baghdād	Military middle class; son of an Ottoman army officer	Member of the Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers: see Table 41-4.
Arab, Sunnī	1925, Takrīt	Rural petty official class; son of a policeman	–
Arab, Sunnī	1927, Ḥadīthah	Trading lower middle class; son of a tradesman	–

[a]Sided with the wing of 'Alī Ṣāleh as-Sa'dī in the intraparty conflict of 1963.
[b]Ba'thīs of more than 5 years' standing.
[c]Co-opted September 26, 1963.
[d]Non-Ba'thīs but friends of the party.
[e]Ba'thīs of 2 to 4 years' standing.
[f]A type of peasant-entrepreneur.
[g]Ba'thī of less than 1 year standing.
[h]Co-opted 28 February 1963.

In the cabinet the Ba‘thists occupied a majority or, to be specific, twelve out of the twenty-one seats,[2] including all the key ministries. Three other seats were filled by prominent members of the old Free Officers’ movement–Staff Brigadier Nājī Ṭāleb, an independent nationalist; Brigadier Fū’ād ‘Āref, a Kurd; and Staff Brigadier Maḥmūd Sheet Khaṭṭāb, who sympathized with the Moslem Brotherhood.[3] Of the remaining portfolios, one went to a member of the landowning Kurdish family of the Barzinjī Sayyids,[4] two to ex-affiliates of the defunct, right-oriented Independence party,[5] and three to specialists of distinctly conservative temperament.[6]

By and large, in the capital as in the provinces, the Ba‘th party tried to rule through its own cadres or, in more precise terms, through its “active members.” This type of membership–the *‘uḍw ‘āmil*, to use the Arabic appellation–was not widely open or easily attainable. To reach that high in the party scale, a Ba‘thī had to pass through five other stages, those of a *mu’ayyid* (“supporter”), *naṣīr* (“partisan”) second grade, *naṣīr* first grade, *murashshaḥ* (“candidate”), and ‘uḍw mutadarrib (“member-trainee”). In these stages there were no fewer than 15,000 Ba‘thists in February 1963, whereas the “active members” counted only about 830.[7] In other words, the former outnumbered the latter by 18 to 1. The figures do not include the broad circle of unorganized “friends” *(aṣdiqā’)*, who often shared in giving effect to the party’s will. Only the “active members” could participate in the election of party commands or rise to responsible party positions. The “trainees” and “candidates” were entitled to give opinions at party meetings, vote on party policy, and receive secret party circulars, but had no elective privileges whatever. The Ba‘thists in the lowest stages enjoyed the fewest rights and bore by far the greater part of the burden. The highly exclusive character of “active membership” may further be inferred from the fact that from February to November 1963, the Ba‘thists in this category scarcely increased, if at all, whereas the number of “supporters” and “partisans” more than tripled in the same period. The party had not always been so strongly stratified. The division of “partisans” into two grades and the introduction of the stage of “supporters” dated only from 1962, and aimed apparently at regulating the flow into the ranks. The party’s elitism had also become more marked after ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī took the helm, and would before long form the subject of much controversy in inner party

circles. At the 1964 Extraordinary Syrian Regional Congress of the Ba‘th party, Michel ‘Aflaq would complain:

TABLE 55-2

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to the National Council of the Revolutionary Command, February to November 1963

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	No.	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq
Moslems			
Shī‘ī Arabs	5	27.8	44.9
Sunnī Arabs	12	66.7	28.6
Kurds	1[a]	5.5	12.7
Turkomans	–	–	3.4
Persians	–	–	3.3
Jews	–	–	.3
Christians	–	–	6.4
Sabeans	–	–	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	.1
Total	18	100.0	100.0

Class Origin

		No.	%
Classes of low income		4	22.2
Peasants	2		
Worker	1		
Policeman	1		
Classes of lower middle income		8	44.5
Petty agricultural entrepreneur	1		
Tradesmen	4		
Member of profession	1		
Trading man of religion	1		
Man of religion	1		
Classes of middling income		6	33.3
Official	1		
Man of religion	1		
Army officers	2		
Landed notable	1		
Impoverished aristocratic landowner	1		
Total		18	100.0

Education

	No.
College	18

Sex

	No.
Male	18
Female	–
Total	18

Occupation

		No.
Civilians		
Party workers		3
Members of professions		5
Schoolteachers	3	
Lawyer	1	
Engineer	1	
Army officers		10
Staff major	1	
Staff lieutenant colonel	1	
Staff colonels	2	
Brigadier	1	
Staff brigadier	2	
Staff major general	1	
Staff lieutenant general	1	
Staff marshal	1	
Total		18

Place of Birth

	No.
Baghdād	4
Najaf	1
Middle-size provincial town	2
Small provincial town	5
Born in Baghdād to family of recent migrants from, or from neighborhood of, small provincial town	4
Born in Baghdād to family of recent migrants from village	1
Born in Baghdād, place of origin could not be determined	1
Total	18

Age Group in 1963

	No.
27-29 years	4
30-34 years	3
35-39 years	8
42 years	1
49 years	2
Total	18

Party Affiliation

	No.
Ba‘thīs of more than 5 years' standing	10
Ba‘thīs of 2 to 4 years' standing	5
Ba‘thī of less than 1 year standing	1
Non-Ba‘thīs but friends of the party	2
Total	18

[a]Arabized Fuwailī Kurd.

> The Ba‘th party in Iraq embraced thousands of tested Arab young strugglers. They were, however, deprived of the right of membership which was confined to hundreds, some say to fewer than eight hundred, others to fewer than seven hundred. These hundreds, distributed over the different provinces . . . tens in each province, governed Iraq’s millions. From such a secret group no authentic will could emerge. This was wholly out of keeping with the spirit of our party’s rules.[8]

Far more serious was the very thin spread of the party among officers and in the army at large. This is why many sensitive military positions were held by non-Ba‘thists. Thus at the head of the Fifth, Second, and First Divisions stood respectively Brigadier ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref,[9] the president’s brother; Staff Brigadier Ibrahīm Faiṣal al-Anṣārī, an independent nationalist; and Staff Brigadier ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Farḥān,[10] who increasingly edged toward the Ḥarakiyyīn, the Movement of Arab Nationalists. Toward this same party also tended the mood of Staff Colonel Muḥammad Majīd,[11] the director of military planning; Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ṣubḥī ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd,[12] the director of military operations; and Air Staff Colonel ‘Āref ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq, who led the air force from 8 to 28 February 1963. The commandant of the military police, Colonel Sa‘īd Ṣlaibī, was from aj-Jumailah, ‘Āref’s tribe. Staff Major General Ṭāher Yaḥya, the chief of staff, was, as already noted, only a nominal Ba‘thī. Of course, the pinnacle of the military structure, the post of minister of defence, was occupied by the veteran and tested Ba‘thī Ṣāleh Mahdī ‘Ammāsh. The loyalty of Major Muḥyī-d-Dīn Maḥmūd, the chief of the military intelligence, was also beyond question. Moreover, the party gave special heed to the air force and, as from February 28, placed it under Ba‘thi Staff Brigadier Ḥardān ‘Abd-ul-Ghaffār at-Takrītī. Over and above that, it tried to hold fast to as many armored units as possible. In addition to the Fourth Tank Regiment, which pulled the coup and was now firmly in its hands, it gained control of the First and Third Tank Regiments, the commands of which were entrusted to Ba‘thī Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ḥasan Muṣṭafa an-Naqīb and Ba‘thī Staff Major Muḥammad al-

Mahdāwī.[13] It also appears to have won the political sympathy of Lieutenant Colonel Ṣabrī Khalaf aj-Jubūrī, the commander of the Khālid Tank Regiment. At the same time, Ba‘thī Staff Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Muṣṭafa Naṣrat[14] was raised to the command of the important Fourth Armored Division, and Ba‘thī Staff Colonel Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī allowed, it would seem, to combine his duties as assistant chief of staff and the directorship of the Armored Corps. However, as pointed out in another connection, the command of the Third Armored Division went to the pan-Moslem ‘Abd-ul-Ghanī ar-Rāwī.

The thinness of the party’s military support and the passive or superficial Ba‘thism of not a few of the newly won officers drove the civilian Ba‘th command or, to be exact, ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī, the party’s secretary, to give increasing weight to the Nationalist Guard. On the day of the coup, in February, this force counted no more than 5,000 men, but by May it had grown to 21,000 and by August to 34,000.[15] It was basically drawn from the “supporters,” “partisans,” and “friends” of the Ba‘thists. In nonparty terms, it embraced enthusiasts, seekers of adventure, and, if one is to judge by their behavior, plain ruffians. Air Colonel Mundhir al-Wandāwī,[16] its commander from mid-February to early November, and an officer-Ba‘thist of long standing, took his orders directly from ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī, and continued to do so even after Law No. 25 of April 4 had formally brought the Guard under the National Council of the Revolutionary Command.[17] The rapid rise in the authority of as-Sa‘dī and al-Wandāwī and in the numerical strength of the Guardsmen created in the country a sort of military dualism which, when joined to the great audacity that the force acquired, ended, as was bound to happen, by giving serious offense to the army and, in their majority, to the officer-Ba‘thists themselves. The command of the Guard, remarked later an internal party critique, “acted as though it were the highest authority” and became so “reckless and flushed with power” that its men “often stopped, searched, and even abused army officers.”[18] As the force was sustained by neither talent nor forethought, and as its fighting capacity was, in a relative sense, still negligible–it had only light weapons–it formed more a source of political disruption than of immediate menace to the ascendancy of the military. In other words, it merely inflamed the minds of the officers without, at the same time, strengthening, in any effective way, the hand of the civilian component of

the party. Moreover, by its vindictiveness toward its political enemies and the great deal of cruelty which it worked, the Guard succeeded in making itself generally hated and in severely damaging the image of the party in the public mind. The issue led also, naturally enough, at first to contention in the inner councils of the regime and the party and, in the end, to an open and disastrous split.

There were other factors making for failure. One was the youth of most of the new leaders: four of the members of the Revolutionary Command Council were in their twenties, eleven in their thirties, and only three in their forties.[19] Of course, the presence of youth in government need not be in itself a liability, but in this case it was attended by a glaring ineptness and want of imagination. Said ʻAflaq at a closed session of the party in 1964, with the members of the Iraqi Regional Command in mind: "After the revolution [i.e., the February coup] I began to feel anxiety about [their] individualistic and rash manner of procedure. I realized that the caliber was not that of a leadership of a country, of a people, but corresponded to the circumstances of negative struggle."[20] He spoke also of other things–of a "blind-eye attitude" toward the mistakes of members of the party and the Nationalist Guard, of "conceit," "negligence," "improvisation," "personal rivalries,"[21] and "a rush upon positions and fat emoluments."[22] Matters, ʻAflaq revealed,

> reached such an extent that Comrade Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr–the premier–whom all esteem, at least to my knowledge, for his loyalty, high character, experience, and soundness of judgement, . . . told me at the beginning of June: "I used to behold affection in the eyes of the people but now I take unfrequented back streets to keep out of sight and avoid their looks of hate.[23]

Much of the trouble of the regime could be explained by its lack of a considered program. Indeed, its leaders often left the impression of losing their bearings. "We got lost in the government," ʻAlī Ṣāleḥ as-Saʻdīsaid later.[24] He and his associates also admitted that the February coup had, in a great measure, the characteristic of "a leap into the unknown."[25] Three months or so before the coup, the Pan-Arab Command of the party had, it is

true, passed a resolution calling for the preparation of “a transitional program” for the government-to-be. But when the Command met in Beirut on 13 February, that is, five days after the Ba‘th had seized the power in Baghdād, it became apparent that the resolution had not been acted upon. Finally, Dr. Munīf ar-Razzāz, a Jordanian, and Dr. ‘Abdallah ad-Dā’im, a Syrian, neither of whom had any first-hand acquaintance with Iraq’s problems, sat together and in three days produced a program[26]–apparently, at least in essence, the very same that Premier al-Bakr read on the radio and television on March 15[27] and which soon after was quietly put aside.

The regime could find slight sustenance in the ideology of the party. The Ba‘thists’ highbrow, Michel ‘Aflaq, had not been intellectualizing for them for some time. Events had outstripped the ideas that he had formulated in the forties and first half of the fifties. These ideas were, in any case, too general and too ill-defined, and contained much that was reminiscent of the products of the old romantic mills of Europe and little that was the result of disciplined thinking upon the living Arab situation. A Ba‘thī would have looked in vain through the whole literature of his party for a single objective analysis of any of the serious problems besetting Iraq. Instead of thought, he could find only wide and vague slogans. No one around seemed able to produce ideas, at least in a language that was comprehensible to a semiplebeian like ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī. “We searched till we wearied,” he complained after the Ba‘thī debacle, “for socialist thinkers who might help us, but could find none.”[28] ‘Aflaq did not make the grade: as-Sa‘dī and most of his companions regarded him as old fashioned and irrelevant. Poorly nourished on the intellectual side, they put too much trust in their physical powers. It was much simpler to govern in this way. “Nothing,” said Dostoevsky once, “is harder than to have an idea or easier than cutting off heads.”

It was because of too little forethought and an inadequate understanding of their very difficult situation that the Ba‘thists entered upon the fatal course toward one-party rule, and thus succeeded in turning against them forces from every point of the political compass. The logic of one-party rule, supplementing other antecedent impulses, drove the Ba‘thists to carry their anticommunism to extreme lengths, in consequence of which they, by the way, alienated the whole Soviet camp and became unwittingly entangled in the game of the “Cold War.” The same logic–though here too

deeper causative factors were simultaneously at work–was instrumental in their resumption of the campaign against the Kurds in June. By that time, the remnants of the Independence party and the Nāṣirites in general, including the Ḥarakiyyīn and the recently formed Arab Socialist party,[29] had also become hostile to the regime. The Ḥarakiyyīn had been for some months protesting against the denial of freedom of action to "progressive nationalist" organizations. In April, their mouthpiece in Beirut had spoken of "bloody collisions" in Mosul, al-Karkh, and other places between their followers and the Nationalist Guard.[30] And then on May 25 had come an announcement by the Revolutionary Command Council, accusing "the Ḥarakiyyīn, reactionaries, 'tailists' (the Ba'thī word for Nāṣirites), opportunists, and other rancorous elements" of a "dark conspiracy" against the state[31]-an accusation which the Ḥarakiyyīn at once branded as "entirely false" and "merely an attempt to cover up a preconceived plan for the liquidation, both inside and outside the army, of progressive unionist elements known for their nationalist firmness and their struggle."[32]

A falling out with Iraq's Nāṣirites meant, in effect, a falling out with Egypt's Nāṣir. Iraq's Ba'thists had only the month before–on April 17–joined with him and the government of Syria in a declaration of intent to federate their countries within two years. By July the project had collapsed. In retrospect, it appears that this consummation and the series of immediate causes that led to it could not have been obviated. It had its roots in circumstances that antedated the Iraqi Ba'thists' rise to power, and which were not of their making. A deep distrust, born of the experiment of the United Arab Republic of 1958-1961, divided Nāṣir and the Ba'th of Syria. Not unrelated to this was another very important fact: the growth since 1959 of a new Syrian Ba'th, acting independently of the parent body and deriving its impetus from a Secret Military Committee, with 'Alāwī[33] Colonels Ṣalāḥ Jadīd, Ḥāfiḍh Asad, and Muḥammad 'Umrān[34] as its leading nucleus. Still smarting from the treatment meted out to its members in the days of the Egyptian-Syrian union, this new military Ba'th was in 1963 dead set against any genuine constitutional link with Nāṣir. This is why it showed so little interest in the March-April Tripartite Union negotiations: only one of its members, Muḥammad 'Umrān, went once to Cairo, and essentially in the capacity of an observer. But, having both feet firmly planted in the army, it formed the real heart of the Syrian

government and proceeded to assert its will by instituting on 20 April a purge that was to embrace all Nāṣirite officers, thus wrecking the tripartite pact in the very week it was concluded. This sudden move was aimed also ultimately–though this was not yet apparent–at the leaders of the classical Ba‘th themselves, Michel ‘Aflaq and Ṣalāḥ-ul-Bīṭār, with whom the new military Ba‘thists had very little affinity. By now directing all his fire against ‘Aflaq and al-Bīṭār, who never abandoned their belief in the indispensability of Cairo to any union, Nāṣir unwittingly played into the hands of the real enemies of pan-Arabism in Syria. These are matters of inter-Arab history and, relating only obliquely to the present study, cannot here be set forth in greater detail. More about them could be read in the interesting pages of Munīf ar-Razzāz, one-time secretary general of the Ba‘th party.[35] The point that concerns us is that it was in the toils of this sequence of events, of whose implications they were only incompletely aware, that the Iraqi Ba‘thists got caught.

The break with Nāṣir and the coming to naught of ‘Āref’s efforts in August at reconciling Cairo and the Ba‘thists widened in Baghdād the gulf between the party and its military allies which the dispute over the Nationalist Guard had opened up. Visiting Iraq in September, Syria’s Colonel Muḥammad ‘Umrān sensed that things were not going the Ba‘thists’ way in the army, and that ‘Āref had changed and begun to conspire against the party.[36]

In the end, however, the regime of the Ba‘thists was extinguished by the divisions within their own ranks. Not only had the civilian and military members of the party been acting at cross purposes, but both these components had also been living in faction.

This state of affairs could in part be explained by the fact that the Ba‘th consisted of diverse social elements. On the levels of the command and “active membership” it was, it is true, essentially a party of the middle and lower middle classes. But, of course, people in such income ranges tend, by reason of their sundry callings and sundry interests, to possess a feeble aptitude for cohesion. Moreover, even at the levels indicated, the party embraced a substantial proportion of persons from low-income backgrounds. Thus, while 33.3 percent of the members of the National Council of the Revolutionary Command came from families of middle incomes, and 44.5 percent from families in the lower middle ranks, 22.2

percent came from low-income homes (see Table 55-2). The corresponding percentages for the members of the Ba‘th Regional Command, which led the February coup, were 12.5; 37.5; and 37.5, the remainder having a high-income status.[37] Again, out of the approximate total of 830 “active members”[38] of the party in 1963, about 5 percent were peasants, largely from the province of Dīwāniyyah, 20 percent workers, in the main from the Karkh side of Baghdād, “more than 50 percent students of diverse social origins,” and the rest officers, officials, members of the professions, and “other elements of the bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie.”[39] There were, of course, larger concentrations of persons from low-income groupings among the “partisans,” “supporters,” and “friends” of the party.

No less indicative of the diversity of the party’s composition was the fact that the officer-Ba‘thists were, almost without exception, Arab Sunnī and, by birth or origin, preponderantly from the country towns of the upper Tigris and the upper Euphrates, whereas the majority of the highest civilian leaders were Shī‘īs by extraction. Thus only three out of the eight members of the Ba‘th Regional Command just referred to were Sunnī” Arabs, whereas four were Shī‘ī Arabs and one was of Shī‘ī Fuwailī Kurdish descent (see Table 52-1). Again, out of the total of fifty-two members[40] of the various regional commands that guided the party from 1952 to November 1963, 38.5 percent were Sunnī Arabs, 53.8 percent Shī‘ī Arabs, and 7.7 percent Shī‘ī Fuwailī Kurds (see Table 58-1). However, as Shī‘īs and Sunnīs were to be found in both of the basic factions that will be identified presently, it would be an error to give the sectarian element a considerable weight in the party’s inner conflict.

Social heterogeneousness tended naturally to make for differences in impulses, passions, hopes, and turns of mind. Indeed, not long after their victory over Qāsim, the Ba‘thists discovered that their opposition to his government was the only factor that had held them together. Otherwise, they were merely “unionists” in general and “socialists” in general. The very vagueness of the slogans that had facilitated their coalescence against Qāsim now repeatedly threatened to rend them asunder.

The unsubstantiality of ideological links smoothed the path before other connections within the party. Thus Ba‘thists from the same town, say Takrīt, or of the same profession–this is particularly true of the military members–or from similar social backgrounds tended to cooperate more readily with

each other than with other Ba‘thists. The tenuousness of the ideological nexus also fostered the growth of ties of private interest or of cliques around individuals. In this context fits the rivalry between ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī and Ḥāzem Jawād, the second civilian figure in the party, who, after February 8, seemed unable to see eye-to-eye on anything.

The division began taking shape as early as February 11. ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī has since brought out that on that day, after a “clash” with ‘Āref in the Revolutionary Command Council, he told Ḥāzem Jawād that “this man was going to give us trouble. But my attitude did not find acceptance. When next the Regional Command met in Ḥāzem’s house, I said I would resign from the government, but this too was rejected. After that Ḥāzem and Ṭāleb [Shabīb] went off and told ‘Āref:‘ ‘Alī is bent upon killing you.’ ”[41]

One discord now followed another. In March, the main point of contention was the Personal Status Law No. 188, which Qāsim had passed in 1959 and which, among other things, placed, by implication, female and male relatives on an equal footing with regard to intestate inheritance. On the initiative of ‘Āref and Premier al-Bakr, this and other provisions “inconsistent with the Shar‘ī (Islamic) Law” were repealed on March 18.[42] The step was taken, ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī subsequently complained, while he was away in Cairo, although he had warned in the Revolutionary Council that it “would lead to a split.” If the thing is carried through, “how could we expect the world to look upon us as a progressive regime?” he had said.[43]

In April the Ba‘thists were in two minds about their attitude toward the Nāṣirites. Ḥāzem Jawād, backed by Ṭāleb Shabīb and ‘Āref, argued for a political front with them and other nationalists. As-Sa‘dī, however, clung to a tough line and had his way.[44]

In May the issue was as-Sa‘dī himself. He had up to this point provided much of the driving power of the regime. By virtue of his forcefulness and the firm grip he had upon the machinery of the party, and the country’s police system and security services, his authority had gone on increasing. But to many in the Revolutionary Council he seemed impetuous in his decisions, extreme in his discourse, and so indifferent to the feelings and opinions of others. This and the regime’s rapid decline in public favor worked to the advantage of al-Bakr and ‘Āref, who had been eagerly awaiting an opportunity to diminish his power. On May 11, in a cabinet reshuffle, he was reduced to minister of guidance. The post of minister of

interior, which he had occupied, went to his rival, Ḥāzem Jawād. He retained, however, his title as deputy premier.

In June a high point was reached in the dispute over the Nationalist Guard to which as-Sa‘dī, in the hope of recovering lost ground, had shifted his energies. On the fourth of that month, in a telegram to Colonel al-Wandāwī, the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces threatened to disband the Guard should it not desist from proceedings "prejudicial to public security and the repose of citizens." Al-Wandāwī, greatly daring, demanded the annulment of the telegram, "since the Nationalist Guard is a popular force with an independent command and the right to issue orders of this sort does not belong to any person but only to a popularly accredited authority and, in the existing revolutionary circumstances, to the National Council of the Revolutionary Command exclusively."[45]

However, after the revival of the war in Kurdistan on June 10 and the Communist rising at ar-Rashīd Camp on July 3, the Ba‘thists, realizing the danger of their situation, closed ranks. But the spirit of harmony rapidly passed away. In August we find Ḥāzem Jawād, Ṭāleb Shabīb, al-Bakr, and ‘Āref turning over in their minds the idea of removing ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī from the government, the Regional Command, and the Revolutionary Council, "inasmuch as his presence has become a provocation to others" and "because he ruins everything."[46] But, fearing the repercussions of such a move upon the regime, they held their hand.

In the meantime, as-Sa‘dī had been solidifying his position in the party. At the Iraqi Regional Congress, which met on 13 September, he laid bare the real extent of his influence. He and three of his allies–Ḥamdī ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī, and Hānī al-Fkaikī[47]–were elected to the new Regional Command. Ṭāleb Shabīb was defeated. Ḥāzem Jawād was, however, retained. Twenty-six out of the total of forty-five delegates had voted for him[48] but, according to his opponents, only as a result of the "moral terror applied by the military rightists jointly with Michel ‘Aflaq."[49] The other successful candidates were Premier al-Bakr, Minister of Defence Ṣāleḥ Mahdī ‘Ammāsh, and Karīm Shintāf,[50] the editor of *Aj-Jumhūriyyah* and a colorless figure.

A "new tune," to use ‘Aflaq's words, began now to be heard in the party: "the tune of 'the right' and 'the left.' "[51] As-Sa‘dī took to calling his rivals "right-wingers"–a label that clung to them for good. At the same time and

quite suddenly he declared himself for “Marxism.” He had as late as February 19 publicly disassociated himself from this standpoint. “We are not Marxists,” he had said, “we only aspire at a nationalist democracy.”[52] But that now was “bourgeois idealism” from which he hastened to wean his thoughts. He also washed his hands of the blood of the Communists. This abrupt volte-face was possible only because as-Sa‘dī was ideologically very unsettled and very primitive. Together with this, however, there was the pull of his semiplebeian circumstances and connections. Moreover, the change may have been induced by the powerful radical currents that traversed the lower ranks of the party’s supporters, and in turn accounted for the increasing leverage he had henceforth upon them.

As-Sa‘dī’s adoption of “Marxism” proved most opportune to his need: by enabling him to hitch horses with a similarly inclined segment of the Syrian Ba‘th, led by Ḥamūd ash-Shūfī,[53] the Syrian regional secretary, and abetted by some of the members of Syria’s Secret Military Committee,[54] it assured his triumph at the Ba‘th Sixth National Congress, which sat in Damascus from 5 to 23 October. With a firm bloc of votes at their disposal–most of the twenty-five votes of the Iraqi delegation and of the eighteen votes of the Syrian delegation[55]–as-Sa‘dī and ash-Shūfī dominated the proceedings from the very first day. They secured a working majority on the new National Command,[56] rode roughshod over Michel ‘Aflaq’s classical wing, and carried the congress with them into declaring for “socialist planning,” “collective farms run by peasants,” “workers’ democratic control of the means of production,” and “a party resting essentially upon the workers and peasants.” They also induced the congress to take a stand against the rise of “ideological notability” in the party “at the expense of its principles . . . and the interests of the nonparty masses.”[57] That was an unmistakable dig at ‘Aflaq who, after the close of the congress, is said to have affirmed: “This party is no longer my party.”[58]

At the congress ‘Aflaq, who was at bottom a middle-of-the-roader, had tried to stave off the radicalization of the Ba‘th. “I talked and warned a great deal,” he said later,

> I referred unambiguously to a manner of proceeding which was alien to the Party . . . : the forming of blocs, the professional exploitation of the party’s Rules . . . and verbal quibble and sophistry. It doesn’t make

sense that Ba‘thists should turn into men of this sort when they hold in their hands the fates of millions . . . and when the whole nation is waiting to see whether the Ba‘thī experiment is worthy of life. . . . Let us speak plainly. On what basis have you risen to leadership? . . . Is it to smooth the path for so-and-so, who only a year ago had been members of the Communist party, to conspire against our principles? . . . How did persons, who a year or so before had been Communists in Syria and Iraq, attain to the highest command?[59] . . . I am not against Marxism, but the Ba‘th is scientific socialism plus spirit. . . . With feelings of love I cautioned the members of the National Congress, but in vain. I told them word for word: “I have become of the past. I have no longer any worldly ambition. I put my life in this party and desire nothing other than to see it grow and truly prosper. This is why I am filled with anxiety. . . .” I told them to question me and not to prevent me from speaking, for things got to such a point at the congress that I once asked for the floor and was turned down. . . . When the time came for the election of the new National Command, I was put up as a candidate but I withdrew my name . . . because I realized that I was going to be used as a screen. . . . I had known that they would nominate me and elect me by unanimous vote, for they needed me, but why should I have assisted in concealing the truth from the Party? . . . However, pressure was brought to bear on me from every side. . . . For two days I remained in a state of inner torment . . . and kept away from the congress. The sessions were, as a result, delayed. After that I went back and for one or two hours, while the elections for the command were in progress, I watched silently and in a stupor of dismay. I deliberated in my mind whether to stay or walk out. In the end I told them bluntly: “This command emanated from the action of blocs, which, if remaining at the helm, will, with their factious spirit, bring the party to ruin. If, on the other hand, the command, even though issuing from blocs, can still escape their influence and rise to a sense of responsibility, I will be prepared to serve on it. Otherwise leave me alone.” . . . They gave me assurances [to this effect] . . . whereupon I proceeded with my work.[60]

‘Aflaq remained at the head of the National Command, but could neither turn the party back to its old position nor pull up on ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī or Ḥamūd ash-Shūfī. More than that, the reins seemed to be completely slipping from his hands.

In the meantime, in Iraq the sharp turn to the left taken by the Sixth National Congress had alarmed wide sections of the officer corps. It also led to political regroupings, and accentuated and deepened the divisions within the party. On the side of as-Sa‘dī and his confederates in the Regional Command–Ḥamdī ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rādī, and Hānī al-Fkaikī–now stood the Nationalist Guard, the Ba‘thī-controlled Federation of Students and Union of Workers, the bulk of the party, and a handful of officer-Ba‘thists, notably Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī, the assistant chief of staff, and Mundhir al-Wandāwī, the commander of the Nationalist Guard. With Ḥāzem Jawād and Ṭāleb Shabīb were most of the officer-Ba‘thists, including Ṭāher Yaḥya, the chief of staff; Ḥardān at-Takrītī, the commander of the air force; ‘Abd-us-Sattār ‘Abd-ul-Laṭīf, the minister of communications; and Muḥammad al-Mahdāwī, the commander of the Third Tank Regiment. As far as rank-and-filers could determine, Premier al-Bakr and Defence Minister ‘Ammāsh kept a middle course and, when the issue came to a head, appeared, indeed, to be exerting themselves with a view to bringing the two sides to a mutual accommodation. But in the opinion of as-Sa‘dī’s faction, they were “in fact shrewdly working to push the entire party and regime toward the right.”[61] Michel ‘Aflaq also seemed to be playing two roles: openly he was evenhanded, but in the back part of the scene was thought to be urging on as-Sa‘dī’s opponents.

The critical test of strength began on 1 November with a presidential edict replacing, in the command of the Nationalist Guard, Mundhir al-Wandāwī by Lieutenant Colonel ‘Abd-us-Sattār Rashīd, a nonpolitical soldier. Al-Wandāwī, showing his teeth, refused to relinquish his post.

The next move was much more drastic. On 11 November, an Extraordinary Regional Congress met in Baghdād to elect eight additional members to the Regional Command, and thus bring it to the new complement of sixteen required by an amendment to the Internal Rules adopted at the Sixth National Congress.[62] The elections had scarcely got under way when some fifteen officers, openly armed, burst into the meeting-hall. One of them, Colonel al-Mahdāwī, the commander of the

Third Tank Regiment, stepped forward and, according to the version of the incident put out by as-Sa‘dī, exclaimed: *“I* have been told by Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq, the philosopher of the party, that a gang lords over the party in Iraq and has its analogue in Syria, and that the two had laid their heads together and dominated the Sixth National Congress, wherefore they must be eliminated.”[63] He then attacked the resolutions of the Sixth Congress, and described them as a “conspiracy” against the party. He concluded by demanding the election of a new Regional Command. Amid “the clatter of arms,” the congress went through the make-believe of choosing the new leadership, the intruding officers, some of whom were not even Ba‘thists, voting along with the rest. The partisans of Ḥāzem Jawād naturally came out on top of the heap, but for appearances’ sake, the names of a few of as-Sa‘dī’s followers, including that of Mundhir al-Wandāwī, were inserted in the list of winners.[64] When the comedy was over, as-Sa‘dī, Ḥamdī ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rādī, Hānī al-Fkaikī, and a fifth man, Abu Ṭāleb al-Hāshimī, a deputy commander of the Nationalist Guard, were seized at gun point and bundled off aboard a military plane bound for Madrid.[65]

The news of the coup had the effect of a lighted match in a powder keg. On the morning of 13 November, the mass of the party’s “supporters” and “partisans” and of the Nationalist Guardsmen poured out into the streets of Baghdād. Guided by members of the Baghdād Branch Command,[66] they set up roadblocks, broke into police stations, and occupied the telegraph office, the telephone exchange, and Broadcasting House. Mundhir al-Wandāwī and another Ba‘thī pilot, seizing two airplanes, bombed ar-Rashīd air base, destroying five MIGs on the ground and, by way of warning, fired a rocket at the presidential palace.

At around 11:00, in a statement read by Defence Minister ‘Ammāsh over Baghdād Radio, Premier al-Bakr warned that “there are now attempts . . . to make a Ba‘thist kill his comrade Ba‘thist,” which “will only benefit the enemies of the party and the people,” and appealed for a “return to sound relations of comradeship and to amity and brotherhood.”[67] By that time the greater part of the capital had fallen into the power of the rank and file of the party and the Nationalist Guard. Al-Bakr and ‘Ammāsh had refused to give orders to the army to interfere.

The Baghdād Branch Command, which had grasped the political initiative and would hold on to it till 18 November, at first demanded the recall of as-Sa‘dī and his four companions, but at length accepted the idea of referring the conflict to the Ba‘th National Command.

In the evening, within hours of an emergency appeal sent out by al-Bakr, Michel ‘Aflaq, General Amīn al-Hāfiḍh, Syria’s head of state, and other members of the National Command[68] arrived from Damascus and Beirut. From the first, ‘Aflaq had uneasy thoughts about their coming to Baghdād. “I felt at every moment,” he revealed subsequently,

> that our presence was unnatural. . . . The stepping in . . . of the head of a state . . . of a command from outside Iraq, in troublous days, when spirits were tense and when, in the wake of the decline of the preceding months, not one-fourth or, for that matter, any of the parts of the country was Ba‘thī, was hard to bear. . . . Plunging directly into the atmosphere of work and meetings we overlooked also certain proprieties. . . . The idea of calling at the Presidential Palace was suggested to us, but we put the visit off and then forgot about it completely. . . . For his part, ‘Abd-us-Salām [‘Āref] did not come to greet General Amīn [al-Hāfiḍh] at the airport. Moreover, we sensed . . . that there was in the Ministry of Defence some dissatisfaction at our presence. Anyhow, we had not considered the trip which we made in all its aspects, and whether it was opportune or not. We were, it would seem, carried away by our sentiments. . . . From the moment of our arrival, [the leaders of the Baghdād Branch] made haste to affirm that the authority belongs to the National Command but . . . the radio, the press, the country were in their hands and statements were being put out attacking in an unrestrained language the officers that had intruded into the Regional Congress. . . . And while they went on protesting that the National Command had supremacy, we could see in those critical days no sign of compliance with its wishes. . . . The provocation and the clamor against the officers did not cease. The epithet “traitor” was flung openly at Ḥardān (at-Takrītī) . . . and there were other things of the same kind.[69]

Contrary to the impressions formed abroad, the National Command, though behaving as if it were guiding the affairs of Iraq, never really held the helm. It is true that on November 14 it ordered into exile, over the head of ʻĀref, Ḥāzem Jawād, the minister of interior, and Ṭāleb Shabīb, the minister of foreign affairs. It is also true that on the same day it dissolved the Regional Command which had emerged from the Extraordinary Congress of November 11 and the Regional Command that as-Saʻdī had headed; and declared that it was taking over temporarily the responsibilities of the party leadership in Iraq. But it did all this at the good pleasure or through the sufferance of the party's Baghdād Branch Command. In point of fact, it was this command that called the tune.

However, the political situation was fast becoming very perplexing. All the top civilian leaders of the party had been deported. The cabinet was, in consequence, in a condition of paralysis. The Baghdād Branch Command, content, for the present at least, to act from below, merely generated great noise and seemed incapable of doing much else besides. The National Command, while continuing to behave as though ʻĀref did not exist, itself hung in the air, so to say, and was becoming increasingly embarrassed at its position.

Meanwhile, the *marriage de convenance* between the Baʻthī officers and the civilian component of the party had been rapidly dissolving. The process was accelerated by the coming out of the Baʻthī-controlled General Union of Workers at this juncture for "the crushing of the heads of the bourgeois who have betrayed the party," the execution of the men of capital who were spiriting their money out of the country, and the immediate socialization of factories and collectivization of agriculture.[70]

All these things set the wind blowing in ʻĀref's favor. On 18 November, in concert with Brigadier ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān ʻĀref, his brother, and the commander of the Fifth Division; Staff Brigadier ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Farḥān, the commander of the First Division; Colonel Saʻīd Ṣlaibī, the commandant of the military police; Baʻthī Staff Major General Ṭāher Yaḥya, the chief of staff; and Baʻthī Air Staff Brigadier Ḥardān ʻAbd-ul-Ghaffār at-Takrītī, the commander of the air force, among others, ʻĀref suddenly took action. At daybreak airplanes from the Rashīd base soared for rocket runs at the headquarters of the Nationalist Guard in al-Aʻdhamiyyah. Tanks and motorized infantry swiftly joined in. Simultaneously, attacks were made

elsewhere in the capital and principal towns, and continued until every barrack and outpost of the Guard had been subdued. By sunset resistance had virtually ceased. ʻĀref had administered the *coup de grâce to the regime of 8 February*.

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THE YOUNGER ‘ĀREF, THE NĀṢIRITES, AND THE COMMUNISTS

The regime that ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref headed from 18 November 1963 till his death in a helicopter crash on 13 April 1966 passed through three phases, in each of which it underwent a change of skin.

In its first phase, which extended roughly from November 1963 to February 1964, it rested on a coalition of what might be loosely termed military ‘Ārefites, military Ba‘thists, and military Nāṣirites.

The core of the ‘Ārefite group consisted of Colonel Sa‘īd Ṣlaibī, commander of the Baghdād garrison; Brigadier ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, acting chief of staff, commander of the forces in the field and of the Fifth Division;[1] and, of course, ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref, who now occupied the posts of chairman of the Revolutionary Council, commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and president of the Republic and, in the latter capacity, enjoyed “exceptional powers for one year, automatically renewable if necessary.”[2] The bond tying Colonel Ṣlaibī to the ‘Āref brothers was tribal. They all belonged to aj-Jumailah, which in 1918, according to a contemporary English report, was made up of seventy to eighty *sayyid* houses, subsisting by employment at the shrine of Shaikh Jamīl, northeast of Sumaichah in ar-Ramādī province, and having “no other means of livelihood, except possibly an occasional bite at caravan.”[3] There were perhaps many more Jumailis than the English suspected, for in 1933 one of their chieftains[4] claimed that they counted 1,300 to 1,400 houses. It would appear also that they were spread over a wide area and had their largest concentration in the district of al-Garmah. Be that as it may, it was from this tribe that came presently to be drawn many of the men and noncommissioned officers of the Twentieth Brigade, which ‘Āref had led into Baghdād on July 14, 1958, and had brought up from Kirkūk and thrown against Nationalist Guardsmen on November 18, 1963, and which

he now converted into the Republican Guard and the army's most powerful striking unit. Embracing three infantry battalions and a regiment of tanks, the Guard became ʻĀref's personal instrument and the chief support of his political position.

At the head of the military Baʻthists stood Ḥardān at-Takrītī, the deputy commander-in-chief of the armed forces and the minister of Defence; Ṭāher Yaḥya, the premier; Brigader Rashīd Muṣleḥ, the minister of interior and military governor general; and Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, the vice-president of the Republic. These men had a number of things in common: all were members of the Military Bureau of the Baʻth party; all were, by birth or by origin, from the town of Takrīt; all, except for al-Bakr, were from ash-Shiyāyshah, a Takrītī tribal group, al-Bakr being from the socially dominant al-Begāt. Again, all, save al-Bakr, shared notably in the November coup:[5] Ḥardān at-Takrītī, by the way, commanded in person the planes that strafed the Nationalist Guard into submission. Nevertheless, in the instance of Yaḥya and Muṣleḥ, the spirit of accommodation to existing circumstances proved stronger than ties of party or town. In fact, their links with al-Bakr and Ḥardān were already wearing thin and, before 1963 was over, would snap.

The central Nāṣirite military figures were staff Brigadier Muḥammad Majīd, the director of military planning; Staff Brigadier ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Farḥān, the minister of guidance; Air Staff Colonel ʻĀref ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq, the commander of the air force;[6] Staff Colonel Hādī Khammās, the chief of military intelligence; Staff Colonel Rashīd Muḥsen, the director of public security; and Staff Lieutenant Colonel Ṣubḥī ʻAbd-ul-Ḥamīd, the minister for foreign affairs. They were Nāṣirites, not in the sense that they were Nāṣir's men in Iraq, but by adoption, as it were, and the adoption was theirs, not Nāṣir's. Some, by invoking his name, may not have been uninfluenced by the desire to advance themselves. Others were for him out of genuine enthusiasm for policies of which he was the living embodiment. Their Nāṣirism differed from that of ʻĀref in that they stood for an immediate union with the U.A.R. and a close patterning of the Iraqi regime upon that of Nāṣir, whereas ʻĀref, not unaffected by Nāṣir's own hesitations, had been inching away from his earlier stand and now inclined to a phased and more realistic approach. ʻĀref's Nāṣirism was also attended by a marked attachment to at least the visible aspects of Islam. It was due to

this characteristic of ‘Āref that in his period the serving of alcoholic drinks at state parties was disallowed, the breaking of the Ramaḍān fast in public prohibited, and the members of the Revolutionary Council obliged, before taking office, to swear fidelity to their religion.[7] One other thing set the Nāṣirites off from ‘Āref: their closeness to the Ḥarakiyyīn, or the Movement of Arab Nationalists.

The Ḥarakiyyīn had their beginnings in a small group of nationalist students which came into being in 1948 at the American University of Beirut, and was referred to as al-Ḥalqah (“The Circle”).[8] Under the impact of the defeat of the Arab armies in Palestine, the group, jointly with students from the Syrian University at Damascus and a number of youthful Egyptians from Alexandria, organized in the same year Katā’ib al-Fidā‘-il-‘Arabī or the Phalanxes of Arab Redemption. The Beirut circle included George Ḥabash, a Christian Orthodox medical student, later a physician, born in 1925 in Lydda of a middling rice and sugar merchant; and Hānī al-Hindī, a political science student born in 1927 in Baghdād of a lieutenant colonel in the Iraqi army and a participant in the 1941 Rashīd ‘Alī movement. In the forefront of the Damascus group was twenty-year-old Jihād Ḍāhī, the son of an elementary schoolteacher from Jafar, a village in the district of Ḥomṣ. The most noteworthy of the Egyptians was Ḥusain Tawfīq, a student-refugee who had in 1946 shot dead the unpopular, pro-British, Wafdist ex-Minister of Finance Amīn ‘Uthmān. Innocent of any doctrine and driven by the intensity of their feelings, these young men initiated in 1949 a series of explosions at the British and American legations in Beirut, Baghdād, and Damascus. Their organization, however, broke up in October of 1950, after a majority had refused to approve an attempt upon the life of Syria’s dictator, Colonel Adīb ash-Shishaklī, which was made all the same, and fell through. After a brief pause, George Ḥabash and Hānī al-Hindī of the Beirut group resumed their activities but in another form, linking themselves in 1951 to al-‘Urwa-l-Wuthqa (“The Firm Bond”), a nationalist students’ society, guided by Professors Constantine Zurayq and Nabīh Fāris of the American University, and through this society widened rapidly their circle of followers. Eventually, at a congress held in Beirut on 25 December 1956, a party was formally set on foot under the name of ash-Shabāb al-Qawmī al-‘Arabī (“The Arab

Nationalist Youth"). Beside Ḥabash and al-Hindī, its directing nucleus consisted of Wadī' Ḥaddād, a Christian physician from Ṣafad; Ṣāliḥ Shibl, a Sunnī merchant from Acre; Ḥāmid aj-Jubūrī, a Shī'ī government official from Ḥillah; Aḥmad al-Khaṭīb, a Sunnī physician from Kuwait; Muḥsen Ibrahīm, a Shī'ī teacher from an-Nabaṭiyyah, Lebanon; and four Sunnī students, Ḥikam Darwazah, Thabet al-Mahāynī, Muṣṭafa Bayḍūn, and 'Umar Fādel from Nablus, Damascus, Beirut, and the Cameroons, respectively. Six of the leaders[9] were sons of merchants of medium status, the other five came from the official or professional, or religious middle or lower-middle classes. The party's chief driving force was its ardor for Arab national unity and for the person of 'Abd-un-Nāṣir, upon whom it exclusively pinned its hopes. It betrayed as yet little curiosity in theory or in the social question. In both these respects it merely treaded in the steps of the Egyptian leader, but not without some foot-dragging on the part of the more conservative elements in its ranks. It was only much later, in 1967, in the wake of the disastrous Arab-Israeli war and after going through splits and overcoming resistances, that its prime movers–Ḥabash, al-Hindī, and Ḥaddād–would swing sharply to the left, launching the militant, Marxist-oriented, guerilla-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The Iraqi branch of the party, which was the first to use in 1958 the name of Ḥarakat al-Qawmiyyīn al-'Arab ("The Movement of Arab Nationalists")[10] that the parent body ultimately also adopted, did not make rapid progress in the beginning. Organized in embryo in 1955 by Shibl and aj-Jubūrī, it counted by the July Revolution no more than two hundred adherents. These were students for the most part. Thanks, however, to Hāshim 'Alī Muḥsen, a Shī'ī mud-hut dweller and cigarette worker who had been won over in 1957, the party succeeded in gaining a foothold also among the laborers of Baghdād. But it was the sympathy of the Nāṣirite officers that it attracted in 1963 that gave it a powerful impetus and put it on the Iraqi political map.[11]

The coalition of military Ba'thists, 'Ārefites, and Nāṣirists was a coalition of competing groups and, therefore, inherently unstable. In the continual latent jostling, the Ba'thists were the least advantaged. The excesses and blunders which they committed when the reins were in their hands had turned the instincts of the country against them. By disowning

the bulk of the civilian component of their party, they had also in effect struck at the foundation of their power. With little effort, ʻĀref, acting in concert with the Nāṣirists, eased them out of one position after another: on December 4, 1963, Staff Lieutenant Colonel ʻAbd-us-Sattār ʻAbd-ul-Laṭīf lost the portfolio of communications; on December 16, Ḥardān at-Takrītī was divested of the command of the air force; on January 4, the post of vice-president was annulled, and al-Bakr given the rank of ambassador in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Moreover, as of January 22, at the latest, Ḥardān would appear to have ceased to attend cabinet meetings, although the decree relieving him from his duties as minister of defence was not issued until March 2.[12] His place was taken by Premier Ṭāher Yaḥya, who, joined by Minister of Interior Rashīd Muṣleḥ, tied himself to the triumphant ʻĀref-Nāṣirist chariot.

With the utter defeat of the Baʻth, the next phase in the evolution of the ʻĀref regime was reached. The Nasirites now came to the fore, or perhaps more accurately, were permitted by ʻĀref to have a free hand. The idea of consciously imitating Egypt's line of development prevailed, and the lever of the country's policy was turned with impatience toward the closest possible accord with Cairo in every field.

The first important move in this direction was made on 26 May 1964: the governments of Iraq and the U.A.R. agreed to form a Joint Presidential Council with a view to planning and coordinating their actions in the military, economic, political, social, and cultural spheres; and studying and carrying out the indispensable steps leading to a constitutional union between their two countries.[13] The agreement also envisaged the unification of Egypt's only political party, the Arab Socialist Union, with a similarly modeled state-run organization that was yet to be set up in Iraq. The organization, styled "the Arab Socialist Union-Iraqi Region," was announced on the following July 14, and embraced, in addition to the Ḥarakiyyīn, various nationalist groupings of little significance and some ex-Independents and ex-Baʻthists who had turned Nāṣirites.[14]

On that same day, in a coup aimed at bringing Iraq's economy into consonance with that of Egypt, the government in Baghdād nationalized all banks and insurance companies, and thirty-two large industrial and commercial establishments; set up the autonomous state Economic Organization for Banks to administer the nationalized concerns; and made

provision for the allotment to laborers and employees of 25 percent of the profits of the companies for which they worked, and for their representation on these companies' boards of directors.[15]

Next, on October 16, by way of anticlimax, came the signature of another unity agreement which substituted for the Joint Presidential Council a fundamentally similar coordinating organ, the Iraq-U.A.R. Unified Political Command, and, apart from this, contained nothing more concrete than a promise to realize the hoped-for union "within a maximum period of two years."[16] The Unified Command, which took flesh on December 21, met only once or twice and after that was allowed to die a quiet death.

Deterred by his Syrian experiences, Nāṣir never gave the project for union serious thought. He could have had no illusion as to its feasibility. Iraq was too far geographically from Egypt, for one thing. For another, 'Āref's regime was too thinly based: it rested, to use a phrase current in Baghdād at the time, on "a minority of a minority," in the sense that it had merely the support of the smaller part of the Arab Sunnīs, who themselves formed no more than one-fifth of the population. To the significance of this factor and of the related intrinsic instability of the regime, Nāṣir was fully alive. The point had been driven home to him by the Ba'thī attempt to recapture power, which was scheduled to have been made on the afternoon of September 4 in coincident thrusts by the Fourth Tank Regiment and a flight of six MIG jet fighters. The plotters, who intended to blow up 'Āref's plane as it took off for an Arab summit meeting at Alexandria, were seized only a short time before they were to have gone into action.[17] In consequence, Nāṣir was obliged to send to Iraq on September 5 a military force which was said to have eventually comprised about six thousand men.[18] The force was quartered outside Baghdād in the same camp–that of at-Tājī–in which lodged the Fourth Tank Regiment. Even more indicative of the fragility of 'Āref's position was the complete breakdown on April 5, 1965, of the truce that had been concluded under Nāṣir's auspices between the Kurdish rebels and the Iraqi army on February 10, 1964.

The guardedness of the Egyptian leader on the question of unity naturally weakened the Nāṣirites in Baghdād. They had reached the acme of their influence on November 14, 1964, when in a reshuffle of the cabinet they increased their share of seats from three to six and secured the key portfolio of Interior.[19] By the spring of 1965 they were, however, already losing

ground, not only on account of Nāṣir's attitude but also by reason of the short-run unfavorable effects of the nationalization decrees. Iraq fell far short of the highly developed sense for the good of the community and the competent corps of public administrators that the path toward socialism needs. This and the smuggling of money out of the country by the men of capital produced a discernible decline in the economy. By the fall there would be no fewer than 20,287 laborers out of work.[20] Conservatives in the government[21] had quickly seized upon these symptoms to press for a reversal of the "socialist tide," and succeeded in slowing it down. In April the Nāṣirite ministers met with a rebuff when they demanded a certain degree of public control over foreign trade. At length, on July 4, they resigned. They had other grounds than the "gradual ebbing away" of "socialism." They took particular exception at the "rushing through in the absence of the cabinet and to the detriment of Iraq's true interests" of an agreement between the Oil Minister and the oil companies which, among other things, more than doubled the concession area to which Qāsim had, under Law No. 80 of 1961,[22] restricted the companies.[23] In point of fact, the agreement was never carried out.

'Āref tried to avoid a complete break with the Nāṣirites. He accordingly cultivated the goodwill of Air Staff Brigadier 'Āref 'Abd-ur-Razzāq, the commander of the air force,[24] who was on intimate footing with the Ḥarakiyyīn, being a cousin of Basil al-Kubaisī, a leader of this movement. 'Āref went one step further: on September 6 he appointed 'Abd-ur-Razzāq premier and minister of defence, but balanced him by placing at the head of the Department of Interior Brigadier 'Abd-ul-Laṭīf ad-Darrājī, a personal friend,[25] and by giving the deputy premiership and the portfolios of oil and foreign affairs to Dr. 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān al-Bazzāz, a 52-year-old Baghdādī conservative nationalist, an ex-dean of the Law School, a former ambassador to London, and secretary general to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

'Āref's moves, instead of mollifying the Ḥarakiyyīn and other Nāṣirites, only spurred them to push their conflict with him to the point of no return. On September 15, taking advantage of his absence at an Arab summit meeting at Casablanca, they attempted to seize the power, but Colonel Sa'īd Ṣlaibī, the Baghdād garrison commander and 'Āref's tribal kinsman,

apprised of their intentions, had the last blow. The principal Nāṣirite officers, including ʻĀref ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq, fled the country.

With this opened the third and final phase in the evolution of the regime. ʻĀref and officers from his tribe, that is, from aj-Jumailah, became the sole ultimate arbiters in the state. The man that next to ʻĀref now tied and loosened in the armed forces was the formidable Jumaili Colonel Saʻīd Ṣlaibī. More than that, the crucial threads in the Department of Military Intelligence passed into the hands of Staff Lieutenant Colonel Nāyef ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq, also a Jumailī. However, in this phase, and for the first time since the 1958 Revolution, a civilian, Dr. al-Bazzāz, was raised to the premiership, and a predominantly civilian cabinet given a genuine say in the running of the country. The National Council of the Revolutionary Command, which had been exclusively military in composition[26] the Council's Law No. 61 of (22 April) 1964 precluded the membership of any person who did not hold at least the rank of Lieutenant Colonel[27]-dissolved itself. The legislative powers which it had exercised were vested in the cabinet. However, the making of defense policy and the attending to internal security became the prerogatives of a new, predominantly military organ, the National Defence Council.[28]

Like the premier, the new cabinet was conservative nationalist. It bound itself to the achievement of Iraqi unity; the maintenance of "the supremacy of the law"; the speeding up of steps for the ushering in of parliamentary life; the pursuit of a "wise Arab socialist" policy aiming at "a higher production and an equitable distribution," and "regardful of both the public and private sectors"; and, finally, continued cooperation with the U.A.R., "due account being taken of our special circumstances."[29]

Before the cabinet had had time to do much about its program, ʻĀref suddenly died. On April 13, 1966, his helicopter crashed in a sandstorm near Qurnah in the south of Iraq. His death marked the end of another chapter in the country's political history.

How did the Communists fare under ʻAbd-us-Salām ʻĀref? In the days of the Baʻthists, things had been carried with such a heavy hand that "no two comrades could get together."[30] After the coup of November 1963, however, the stringent measures against the party were relatively relaxed. ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah, Bahā'-ud-Dīn Nūrī, and ʻAbd-us-Salām an-Nāṣirī,[31] who had

been abroad, slipped back into Iraq and, with the help of members of the cadre who had taken refuge in Kurdistan, gradually reformed the badly battered organizations in Baghdād and else-where. Work proceeded quietly and was confined to the building of little cells of faithful and convinced Communists, and to the circulation at irregular intervals and solely within the party of hand-written issues of *Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘ b*.

Open agitation was left to the “Voice of the Iraqi People” and to the “Higher Committee of the Movement Abroad for the Defence of the Iraqi People,” and was guided by the Communist party’s Committee for the Organization Abroad–Lajnat Tanḍhīm al-Khārij–which consisted of the members of the Central Committee who lived in the Communist countries, and would in 1965 comprise ‘Azīz Muḥammad, ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd, Bāqir Ibrahīm al-Mūsawī, ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj ‘AIī Ḥaidar, Zakī Khairī, Thābet Ḥabīb al-‘Ānī, and Mahdī ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Abū Sanā.[32]

At first the mood and opinions of the Committee for the Organization Abroad were unequivocally hostile to ‘Āref. His regime was denounced straight out as “a reactionary military dictatorship.” “Experience,” it was affirmed, “has shown time and again that military rule, whatever its form, is incapable of solving the problems of the people.” All the forces “inimical to imperialism and the reaction” were urged to unite their ranks in a “broad-based national union front” with the aims of ending martial law, freeing “all patriotic prisoners,” reinstating officials and workers dismissed from their jobs, upholding autonomy for the Kurds, strengthening the ties of cooperation with the U.A.R. and other “liberated” Arab countries, and putting forward a “national democratic government . . . anchored on a popularly elected national assembly and on a democratic constitution safeguarding the rights of the people.” To this line the Communists held from November 1963 to May 1964.[33]

New facts, however, brought them out gradually upon a new path. First, there was the interruption on February 10, 1964, of the Kurdish hostilities, which Nikita Khruschev greeted as a step calculated “to enhance the prestige of the Iraqi Republic in the eyes of the peoples of the world.”[34] This development disposed also to a friendlier frame of mind the Communists’ Kurdish Branch which, having by and large escaped the ordeal under the Ba‘thists, formed the strongest mainstay of the party. Second, a series of related happenings in the first half of 1964–the

deepening of the bonds between Cairo and Moscow, the ideological endorsement of Nāṣir's regime by Soviet theoreticians, the release of Egyptian Communist detainees, the visit of Khruschev to the U.A.R., the improvement of Iraqi–USSR relations, the resumption of the supply of Russian arms to Iraq (interrupted by the Ba'thī persecution of the Communists), and, finally, the pronounced Nāṣirite direction in Baghdād culminating in the nationalization measures of mid-July–all these things impelled the Iraqi Communist leaders to turn their faces toward the 'Āref regime.

The change in attitude first revealed itself in June, but found its completest expression at a plenum held by the Central Committee "in Baghdād toward the end of August." This is why it came to be known in party circles as the "August Line" or, alternatively, the "Line of June-August 1964."

The new line had its basic point of departure in a fresh assessment of the Nāṣirite trend. The Egyptian revolution, maintained a manifesto issued by the August Plenum, had moved into "a new stage . . . the stage of important social changes" which had carried the U.A.R. on to "the road of noncapitalist development and toward socialism." This was the echoing of a thesis on the prospects of "former colonies and semicolonies" that appears to have been first propounded at the 1960 Moscow Conference of eighty-one Communist and Workers' Parties. The manifesto went on to say: "The achievements of the Egyptian and Algerian revolutions exercise an increasing influence as an inspiration for the struggle of all the Arab and African peoples and have placed the two sisterly republics in the forefront of the Arab world. "[35]

The August Line went farther. In the words of a later internal critique by the party's left wing: "it viewed cooperation with Cairo–which in effect remained one-sided, since Cairo spurned all our warm appeals–as the key to every subsequent revolutionary development in Iraq . . . and accordingly subordinated the practical policy of the party to the will of Cairo and its partisans in Baghdād."[36]

From the redefinition of the party's position vis-à-vis Nāṣir flowed necessarily a redefinition of its position vis-à-vis the pan-Arab movement which he symbolized: "We, the Communists, took up in the past isolationist attitudes towards the holders of the slogan of Arab unity. The formula that

we put forth after the July Revolution was wrong. . . . We should not have raised a rallying cry contradictory to that of unity."[37] Again:

> It is erroneous . . . that Communists should continue to cling to political democracy as a condition for the support of any Arab unity. The question of democracy, including the issue of party life, can be solved within the course of the operation of unity itself with mass struggle, persuasion, and the persistent influence of the socialist camp upon the Arab leaders themselves.[38]

In other words, the Communists no longer tied their support for unity to the grant to their party of freedom of action. No genuine union was, in any case, anywhere in sight. The Iraq-U.A.R. coordination agreement of May 26 was, and remained, a bond of the flimsiest sort. But the reason the Communists gave for their change of orientation was of a different order: "The Plenum views the question of Arab unity in the light of the new phenomena emerging on the Arab scene, the phenomena of noncapitalist development and social advance which enrich the progressive content of Arab unity and establish it as a movement aiming at both national and social liberation."[39] Upon one point the Plenum placed considerable emphasis–a point which the December 1964 Prague Conference of the Communist Parties would take up, generalize,[40] and raise to a higher key:

> One of the most important guarantees for the victory of the cause of the Arab peoples is the building and consolidation of the ties of solidarity between the two greatest progressive forces in the Arab East, the supporters of Cairo's policy, on the one hand and the Communists and progressives on the other. The necessary objective conditions for this alliance are present to an unprecedented degree and are rooted in the similarity and, on many principal issues, the identity of the aims and programs of struggle of these two forces.[41]

This, in the context of Iraq, necessitated a "positive" stand by the party toward the newly formed Arab Socialist Union. At the same time, the Plenum could not help deploring that this organization should rest on the

principle of "the monopoly of political action."[42] In an internal publication, the party was more explicit: "Our policy with regard to the Socialist Union is to penetrate it on a mass scale. Our struggle within it will take basically an ideological form, centering on socialism and its concepts, and will be conducted with adroitness rather than in a dogmatic manner."[43]

The party's new pro-Nāṣirism and new pan-Arab perspective naturally pushed it also toward a revision of its thinking on the ʻĀref government:

> The Plenum regards the November 1963 coup as a movement which removed the incubus of the fascist regime and "Nationalist Guard" from the backs of the people and created more favorable conditions for the struggle of the anti-imperialist forces to preserve national independence, alter Iraq's official policy and return the country to the caravan of Arab liberation.

For all that, there were grave gaps in the policy of the government:

> the Kurdish problem is still in abeyance; the prisons teem with patriotic strugglers; the country continues to live under the shadow of exceptional conditions . . . ; the economic situation is precarious; stability is virtually nonexistent; the conduct of the authorities offers opportunities for the reactionaries and imperialists to create and promote sectarian chauvinism; and the government machinery swarms with retrograde and corrupt elements.[44]

The Plenum also differentiated between "two conflicting currents" within the regime, one that was "reactionary" and included elements "suspected of links with imperialism," and another that was clearly Nāṣirite and had the party's good wishes.[45] A triumph of the latter current could only reinforce the nationalization trend, which would in turn ease the way for Iraq's advance along the "noncapitalist path."

But this did not mean that the Communists had to work for a purely Nāṣirite government. That being the case, what alternative did the "August Line" offer to them? First, it must be pointed out, that the line involved, in a way, the renunciation of a path leading toward the capture of power: "If we should admit of the possibility of Iraq developing along noncapitalist lines,

it would inevitably follow that we could not steer a course toward the conquest of power by our party. We would remain in the vanguard but there are forces which are gradually adopting our aims."[46]

It should be parenthetically noted how often the theme of "the non-capitalist path" recurs. In fact, it formed the theoretical warp and woof of the "August Line," just as pro-Nāṣirism formed its basic practical bent: the rationale for the support of Nāṣirism, it will be remembered, lay in that it stood for "noncapitalist development" in the Arab world.

Proceeding from the same "noncapitalist" perspective, the "August Line" arrived at the idea that "at the given stage the best government in Iraq would be a coalition of all the patriot forces fighting for complete emancipation and social progress." However, too many factors impeded the conversion of this idea into a real fact. The line, accordingly, rejected "any sectarian underestimation of the possibility of cooperating with a noncoalition anti-imperialist government. Our party holds that there is a growing possibility of improving both the policy and structure of any anti-imperialist government–not all at once, of course, but gradually." How was this to be accomplished? "The growing influence of the socialist camp . . . and the situation now shaping up in the Arab countries . . . emphasize that peaceful mass struggle is the preferred and correct means in the existing circumstances."[47]

After approving the change of the party's line, the August 1964 Plenum, which was the first to be held since the Ba'thī coup of February 8, elected a new Central Committee (see Table 56-1), which consisted of the surviving members of the old leading nucleus except for one newcomer, Mahdī 'Abd-ul-Karīm Abū Sanā, a Shī'ī Arab ex-school-teacher from Dīwāniyyah. To ensure continuity of work in the event of the capture of the leaders active in Iraq, a part of the committee was to continue to live abroad.[48]

To the secretariat of the party was raised 'Azīz Muḥammad (alias "Mu'īn," alias "Nāḍhim 'Alī"),[49] a Kurdish Sunnī ex-tin worker who had been born in Sulaimāniyyah in 1933. Joining the party at the age of fifteen, 'Azīz Muḥammad spent the next decade in royalist prisons. From 1953 to 1956, he associated with the prison segment of the moderate faction of "The Banner of the Workers." He first became a member of the Central Committee in September 1958, when he assumed responsibility for the party's Central Organization Committee. His ascent now to the foremost

Communist position reflected the strength of the party's Kurdish Branch as well as the determination of the party's leaders to orient themselves primarily upon the workers and other laboring Iraqis.

The "August Line" aroused great indignation among the rank-and-file Communists. All the terrible trials that the party had just gone through seemed discredited by the tactic to which the line committed them. In turning toward the government, the Plenum, many members felt, had turned toward a group "whose hands are stained with the blood of the party and the people."[50] In not a few cases the reaction was sharper: discipline was violated, the Plenum's manifesto torn up, the party's instructions ignored.[51] At first the leadership refused to bend under the pressure from below. On 4 October it declared that it was clinging to its line "at all costs." "We expect errors, divergences, and even insubordination," it added.[52] But its attitude contradicted the basic mood of the bulk of the surviving cadre, which had been increasingly moving to the left. At length it gave way. Two developments facilitated its shift of course: one was the resumption of the Kurdish war on 5 April 1965, and the other was the growing disillusionment with ʿĀref of the Nāṣirites themselves, which was already evident in the spring of that year.

In mid-April, even as the Egyptian Communist party was dissolving itself in the U.A.R.'s Arab Socialist Union, the Central Committee in Iraq signified in an internal circular that it was adopting the slogan of "violent struggle."[53] At the same time, it came out openly for the overthrow of ʿĀref's "dictatorial regime" and the establishment of "a provisional national coalition government," embracing representatives of "all the patriotic and anti-imperialist parties and groups" and aiming at "a parliamentary constitutional life" and "a regime emanating from the will of the people." The Central Committee went on to assert that the Communist party, as "the bearer of the historic message of the working class," was there to stay, that the experiment of Iraq's Arab Socialist Union had failed, that the "one-party system" was inapplicable to Iraq "whose circumstances differ from those of other Arab countries," and that, in spite of all the clamor about "socialism," the policy of the authorities "contradicts, politically, economically, and ideologically, the simplest concepts and requirements of socialist construction."

The Central Committee also appealed to the Nāṣirites to withdraw from the government and adhere to the ranks of the "popular opposition."[54]

The Central Committee reasserted its "high appreciation" of the "great and positive role" played by Nāṣir's government on the Arab and international scene, in other words, it set itself against the anti-Nāṣirite current within the Arab Communist movement which Syria's Khālid Bakdāsh had been feeding. However, in June it called upon "the leaders of the U.A.R." to "reconsider" their attitude toward the ʻĀref regime, "which has no future," and to realize that its policy "runs entirely counter to the interests of our people and the Arab peoples" and that "those who uphold this policy do so at the expense of their moral and political position in Iraq."[55]

After the break of Iraq's Nāṣirites with ʻĀref, and the formation in September of the government of ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān al-Bazzāz, which the Central Committee at once denounced as issuing "from the will of one man" and the influence of "the hidden fingers" of the English and the "oil monopolies,"[56] the party veered further to the left, under the unrelenting pressure of the lower and intermediate strata of the cadre.

TABLE 56-1

Central Committees of the Communist Party, August 1964 to September 1967

Name	*Nation and religion*	*Date and place of birth*	*Profession*	*Education*	*Class origin*	*Date (and age) earliest link with Communist movement*[a]
Members of Central Committee Elected at the Plenum Held in August 1964 and Re-elected at the Enlarged Meeting of 9-10 October 1965						
Members residing abroad[b]						
In Moscow:						
ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd[c]		(See Table 31-1)				
Bāqir Ibrahīm al-Mūsawī[c]		(See Table 51-2)				
In Prague:						
ʻAzīz al-Ḥājj ʻAlī-Ḥaidar[d,e]		(See Table 23-1)				
Zakī Khairī[c]		(See Table 14-2)				
Thābet Ḥabīb al-ʻĀnī		(See Table 51-2)				
Mahdī ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Abū Sanā	Arab, Shīʻī	? , Dīwāniyyah	Schoolteacher	Higher Teachers' Training College	Lower middle class	
Members in Iraq						
ʻAzīz Muḥammad (secretary)[c,f]		(See Table 42-6)				
Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī[c]		(See Table 29-1)				
ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah[c]		(See Table 31-1)				
ʻAbd-us-Salām an-Nāsirī[c,d]		(See Table 22-1)				
Ṣāliḥ Mahdī Duglah		(See Table 51-2)				
ʻUmar ʻAlī ash-Shaikh		(See Table 51-2)				
Arā Khajadūr		(See Table 51-2)				

Members of Central Committee Elected for the First Time at the Enlarged Meeting of 9-10 October 1965						
Majīd ʻAbd-ur-Riḍā	Arab, Shīʻī	1934, Kūt	College student	College	Lower middle class; son of an army officer	1952 (18)
Jawād Kāẓhim	Arab, Shīʻī	1923, Ḥillah	Lawyer	Law School	Lower middle class	1944 (21)
Kāẓhim Farhūd	Arab, Shīʻī	1926, Dīwāniyyah	Ex-health employee; head of Peasants' Associations 1959-60	Secondary	Peasant class; son of a peasant	
ʻAbd-ul-Amīr ʻAbbās ʻAbdg	Arab, Shīʻī	1925, Baghdād	Worker-mechanic	Elementary	Working class; son of a worker	1945 (20)
Ḥusain Jawād al-Gumar	Arab, Shīʻī	1924, Baghdād	Journalist	Secondary	Lower middle class	
Member of Committee not Reelected at the October 1965 Enlarged Meeting, but Subsequently Reestablished						
Nāṣir ʻAbbūd	(See Table 29-1)					
Members of Committee Co-opted after the October 1965 Enlarged Meeting						
Jāsim Muḥammad al-Ḥillāwī	Arab, Shīʻī	1920, Baṣrah	Schoolteacher	Elementary Teachers' Training School	Lower middle class	1943 (23)
Peter Yūsufh	Arabized Assyrian, Christian	1924, Mosul	Clerk with a private firm 1959	Secondary	Lower middle class	1945 (21)
Khuḍair Salmāni	Kurd, Sunnī	? , Koi Sanjaq	Worker	Elementary	Working class	
Tawfīq Aḥmad Muḥammad	Kurd, Sunnī	1934, Kirkūk	Oil worker; head of Oil Workers' Union 1959-60	Elementary	Working class	
Salīm Ismāʻīl ʻĪsa	Arab, Shīʻī	1933, Baṣrah	Printing worker	Elementary	Working class; son of a worker	
Salīm Ḥamīd al-Mirzaj	Arabized Persian, Shīʻī	1931, Najaf	Ex-clerk with a private firm	Secondary	Middle class	1948 (17)
Zakiyyah Khalīfah	Arab, Shīʻī	1932, ʻAmārah	Nurse	No formal education	Working class	1946 (16)
ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq Jamīl aṣ-Ṣāfīk	Arab, Shīʻī	1930, Karbalāʼ	Lawyer	Law School	Lower middle class	
Members of Committee Co-opted after the October 1965 Enlarged Meeting (continued)						
Yūsuf Ḥannā Shīr	Arabized Assyrian, Christian	1922, Shaqlāwah	Weaver	Secondary	Lower middle class; son of a clergyman	1944 (22)
Kāẓhim ar-Riḍā aṣ-Ṣaffārl	Arab, Shīʻī	1938, Najaf	Turner	Elementary	Working class	1956 (18)
ʻAdnān ʻAbbās al-Kurdī	Arab, Shīʻī	1936, Dīwāniyyah	Expelled student	Secondary	Lower middle class	

[a]None of the members listed here in full had prior political activity.

[b]At least until 1966.

[c]Members of Politbureau.

[d]Members of Permanent Committee to Coordinate Policies of Arab Communist Parties. Khālid Bakdāsh, Murād Kuwatlī, and Zuhair ʻAbd-uṣ-Ṣamad represented the Syrian Communist party on this committee.

[e]This member was also the party's representative in Prague on journal *Problems of Peace and Socialism*. Led factional "Central Command" group from 17 September 1967; arrested March 1969 but released in May after a public declaration of support for the Baʻth.

[f]ʻAzīz Muḥammad, whose party name is Nāẓhim ʻAlī, resided in Moscow from February 1963 to about August 1965, when he returned to Iraq.

[g]*Masʻūl* (i.e., comrade-in-charge) of workers.

[h]Joined "Central Command" faction September 1967; arrested March 1969; released in July.

[i]Joined "Central Command" faction September 1967.

[j]Arrested 1966; released subsequently.

[k]Husband of Zakiyyah Khalīfah.

[l]Arrested 1966; joined "Central Command" faction September 1967.

On 9-10 October, 1965, the question of "decisive action," that is, the seizure of power by the party, was plainly posed at an "enlarged meeting" of the Central Committee attended by twenty-five Communists, including the members of the Central Committee present in Iraq and representatives

of the leading committees of Baghdād, the Mid-Euphrates, the Southern Zone, and the Kurdish Branch.

Two basic reports were presented to the meeting, one by ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah (alias "Akram"), and the other by Bahā'-ud-Dīn Nūrī (alias "Yāser"). Curiously enough, the "adventurist" position was taken by ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah, who had since 1959 been the chief exponent of the "right" trend in the party. He affirmed that the Communists could not hope for better objective circumstances to deliver a conclusive blow: the "contradictions" within the regime had sharpened, the nationalists had gone over to the opposition, the government had its hands full with the Kurdish revolt, and was completely "isolated" from the people. He voiced apprehensions of the possibility of the talk about a parliamentary life taking a serious turn under Bazzāz, which would prop up the government and render action by the Communists more difficult. He also feared that "some party with forces and potentialities weaker than we are able to provide might venture on a coup and succeed in reaching its goal." He did not think that "the other patriot forces" would be willing to back up a Communist insurrection, and was for the party going it alone. "The destiny of the country," he said, "is being decided these days."

Bahā.'-ud-Dīn Nūrī doubted that the party could undertake an action on its own. "Even if the action succeeds," he argued, "it will unite against it a surreptitious alliance." The people had not also been mentally prepared: "large masses will merely look on, although their feelings are with us." More than that, the Arab and international conjunctures of events did not favor an initiative of this sort. He, however, reluctantly admitted the possibility of the success of a coup in the existing circumstances if the cooperation of the "basic patriot forces" in the Arab part of the country could be secured.[57]

TABLE 56-2

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to the Central Committees of the Communist Party, October 1965 to September 1967

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	No.	*%*	*Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq*
Moslems			
Shī'ī Arabs	16	53.3	44.9
Sunnī Arabs	3[a]	10.0	28.6
Kurds	7[b]	23.4	12.7
Turkomans	–	–	3.4
Persians	1[c]	3.3	3.3
Jews	–	–	.3
Christians	3[d]	10.0	6.4
Sabeans	–	–	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	.1
Total	30	100.0	100.0

Education

	No.	*%*
No particulars	1	3.3
No formal education	1	3.3
Elementary	7	23.4
Secondary	14	46.6
College	7	23.4
Total	30	100.0

Class Origin

	No.	*%*
Working class	9	30.0
Peasant class	1	3.3
Lower middle class	19	63.4
Middle class	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

Sex	No.
Male	29
Female	1
Total	30

Age Group in 1965	No.	%
No particulars	4	13.3
25-29 years	2	6.7
30-34 years	6	20.0
35-39 years	5	16.7
40-44 years	11	36.7
45 years	1	3.3
54 years	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

Occupation or Former Occupation	No.	%
Students	3	10.0
Members of professions	13[e]	43.3
White collar	5	16.7
Workers	7	23.4
Craftsmen	1	3.3
No particulars	1	3.3
Total	30	100.0

Length of Association with Communist Movement in 1965	
No. of years	*No. of members*
14 years	1
17 years	2
18 years	1
19 years	2
20 years	6
21 years	3
22 years	2
23 years	1
37 years	1
No particulars	11
Total	30

[a]Including 1 of mixed Arab-Kurdish parentage.

[b]Including 1 Shī'ī Fuwailī Kurd.

[c]Arabized Persian.

[d]1 Arabized Armenian; 1 Arabized Chaldean; and 1 Arabized Assyrian.

[e]Including 5 teachers, 3 lawyers, and 2 journalists.

'Abd-us-Salām an-Nāṣirī (alias "Fākher") spoke next, and strongly supported Bahā'-ud-Dīn Nūrī. So did Nāṣir 'Abbūd (alias "Ṭāreq"). But others, including Ara Khajadūr and Ṣāleḥ Mahdī Duglah, endorsed the stand of 'Āmer 'Abdallah. The question led to sharp and bitter exchanges. In the end, the Enlarged Meeting took six resolutions, the text of one of which, the third, read as follows:

> It is necessary to lay emphasis once more upon the mode of struggle which the party has adopted and which is based on the decisive role of "H" [i.e., "Hāshim," the underground name of the Military Section of the party] in the overthrow of the ruling power. "H" will be supported

by other revolutionary measures that the party will take and by the enlivening of popular action in the various fields.[58]

The texts of the other resolutions are not available. However, according to one of the participants in the meeting—Ḥamdullah Murtaḍa, a Shī‘ī secondary schoolteacher, a brother-in-law of Syria’s one-time chief of staff, ‘Afīf al-Bizrī, and the *mas‘ūl* of the party’s Mid-Euphrates branch-agreement was reached

to prepare for decisive action, provided that no effort is spared to obtain the cooperation of the other patriot forces-the Kurdish Democrats, the Qāsimites, and some of the nationalist groups of socialist persuasion. Only if such cooperation could not be had, should the party act singlehandedly; but the Politbureau would have first to be satisfied that the circumstances are favorable and victory is within reach.[59]

In due course a report on the Enlarged Meeting was despatched by the leadership in Baghdād to the Committee for the Organization Abroad. In November this committee assembled at Prague to consider the question and formulate its own views and an appropriate reply to Baghdād. Its plenary sessions were held on the eighteenth and nineteenth of that month. *‘Azīz* Muḥammad, the party’s secretary, and all the members of the Central Committee living abroad were present. In view of the significance of the discussion that took place, it is not inappropriate to quote from the record of the sessions at great length:

Session of 18 November 1965

Mu‘īn [Secretary ‘Azīz Muḥammad]:

I have not received the minutes of the Enlarged Meeting in order to know the details. I got only what you have. There are, it would seem, other reports with which I am not acquainted. ... At the present moment the party is not in a position to take decisive action. All the same, the matter was left for the Politbureau and for “Hāshim” [the Military Section

of the party]. . . . The preparation for the Enlarged Meeting was clearly insufficient and hurried.

Sa‘dī [‘Azīz al-Ḥājj]:

In a previous nonplenary meeting of the Committee for the Organization Abroad we discussed the matter in a preliminary way and unanimously agreed that the presentation of the issue, as given in the report of Akram [‘Āmer ‘Abdallah], was narrow. We also unanimously found fault with the other project by reason of its tendency to preclude the party from having its own plan. . . . The two opinions do not take into account at all the possibility of a civil war . . . and rest on the premise of a lightninglike revolution. To build our estimates solely on this basis is, in my view, erroneous, for the question does not depend on our will alone. The enemy may be able, in the event of a sudden action from our side, to fight us for days and weeks in Baghdād and elsewhere and with other means. ... We must be prepared for this. . . . Any party that lets slip an opportunity to initiate under favorable circumstances an armed insurrection and to capture the power unaided, even in a merely democratic revolution, does not deserve to be called Communist as Lenin often said, whereas . . . the reports of Fākher [‘Abd-us-Salām an-Nāṣirī] and Yāser [Bahā’-ud-Dīn Nūrī] make of their opposition to a singlehanded seizure of power by the party a rule and a principle. . . . Such a conception is false and harmful, the more so in view of Yāser’s admission of the existence of forces who play fast and loose with us: while advising us against undertaking any action on our own, they try to do just that themselves. If the conditions are propitious and the other forces refuse to go along, an armed revolution by the party alone is legitimate, necessary, and not inconsistent with the tactic of national cooperation. ... We should not refuse to work together with patriot forces which, though at first vacillating or turning their backs on us, would after the triumph of the revolution join us and help in the tasks of consolidation, provided we keep in our hands the sensitive nerves of power and in particular the armed forces. . . .

It is also necessary that we be prepared practically, mentally, and politically to wage a civil war throughout the country or on a narrower scale. At the same time we must concentrate on our action in the army. . .

. However, we should not put any faith in a swift blow. Of course, it is possible to build hopes upon a wide civil war and then succeed in a rapid action, as happened in the October Revolution. But to rely merely on a coup without making the other preparations is, in my opinion, adventurous.

In the reports presented to the Enlarged Meeting, despite references to the Kurdish rising, insufficient credit was given to its role and importance in maturing the conditions that will bring about the end of the existing state of affairs, in a revolutionary manner.

I am particularly concerned about the conceptions embodied in Comrade Yāser's report. He frames various hypotheses, follows them up one after the other, leaving one in the end: the possibility of the triumph at the present time of a coup from above, provided there is cooperation with all the basic patriot forces in the Arab sector of the country. In the course of the report, however, he gradually destroys the guarantees for the success of even this possibility. He allows, but as a remote supposition, that the party may be able to undertake an action from above on its own, but proceeds to shape up tens of imaginary obstacles and exaggerates transient and secondary ones, and so draws the picture as to compel the inference that such an attempt would be an adventure and a great crime. He assumes that the petty bourgeoisie, being invigorated from the increase of security, will stand against us and that wide popular masses will be slow in coming to our support. He also refers only to the negative features in the Arab and international situation. . . . In my view, these appraisals are exaggerated to a considerable degree. . . .

In Comrade Akram's report I find instances of doubt as to the importance of national cooperation. He, in fact, demands that we should not make what he calls "the decisive action" dependent upon the consent of the other forces. . . . The National Democrats cannot, in any case, be induced into such a course. . . . The nationalists, for their part, are imbued with the idea of monopolizing power. . . . I do not want now to go into details about the reasons for the presentation of Comrade Akram's adventurous plan. I do not deny the existence of leftist currents in the party . . . but the main danger . . . comes from the right. . . . The strange thing is that no so long ago . . . the National Democrats were attacked in

our party and regarded as of secondary significance. . . . Today, however, some comrades sing their praises to prevent our party from preparing for a civil war. . . .

Like Comrade Yāser, Comrade Fākher admits that under certain conditions, it is possible for us to undertake a "decisive action" . . . but he insists that upon our victory we should surrender the power to the other forces.

From all this I have concluded that the study that took place at the Enlarged Meeting was far from scientific and moved in a vicious circle. . . .

I suggest . . . that we continue to use some of the possibilities existing abroad with a view to setting on foot the necessary revolutionary preparations. I mean the possibilities of buying certain things. . . .[60] But my main proposal is that we prepare for such steps under a leadership which truly believes ... in the potentialities of the revolutionary movement. . . .

Ṣāber[Muḥammad Bāqer al-Mūsawī]:

Akram's report contains possibilities concerning the best conditions whereas, in drawing an important plan, a Communist party has to consider all the possibilities, the good and the bad. . . . The other side took this for a principal point in order to refute it, which is a very easy thing to do. . . . It is apparent that our party is discussing the question of power for the first time [*sic*]; as a result there has been a kind of muddleheadedness. . . . I, for one, ascribe considerable importance to our forces in "Hāshim" [the party's Military Section] but we must also see to the arming of the party and the masses so that they could support the coup and ensure its success. . . . The arming of the masses and our action in "Hāshim"[61] cannot be divided. I doubt that we would be successful if we were to rely merely on the armed masses. Previously armies were not as well equipped with weapons as they are now. If we do not win over important forces in the army, at least at the beginning, success cannot be assured. . . .

I believe that the two sides–that of Akram and that of Yāser–are in the wrong. Akram, though asserting that the circumstances are favorable, betrays impatience and the spirit of adventure. At the same time, the

conditions that the other side makes mean in effect that the party will not act at all. . . .

Some comrades in referring to “a swift expert blow” have invoked the example of the July Revolution. But no conditions as prevailed then exist now. No front is in the field, nor could one be expected to come about. The forces that we want to win over have previously fought battles with us and still keep a spirit of enmity toward communism. On the best assumption, they may join with us merely to take the power for themselves. . . . Even from the forces of Nāṣir, a neutral attitude is the most that we could hope for, but I doubt whether this too could be realized, as they are still sensitive to Communists.

It is necessary to take into account a very favorable element: the Kurdish rising. . . . We must at least time our action with its leadership. . . .

I am for placing the command in the hands of those who believe in an independent action by our party. . . .

In my view the October Enlarged Meeting has dealt with the superficial aspects of the question rather than with its essence. The suggestion of Ṣādeq [‘Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd] concerning the encirclement of cities is correct.[62] In other words, we should build armed bases in the neighborhood of cities with a view to paralyzing the enemy.

In a fundamental sense, it is the internal correlation of forces that is the determining factor, although the initiative now belongs to American imperialism. The existence of a socialist camp remains a guarantee against external armed interference. An international conjuncture with negative characteristics should not be an obstacle to action. The international scene gets better through the scoring of local victories. . . .

Ma’mūn[Thābet Ḥabīb al-‘Ānī]:

The most distinguishing feature of the October Enlarged Meeting is that, in the face of the intricate condition of Iraq, it has revealed leftist adventurist opinions and opinions about which the least that can be said is that they are rightist. Most indicative of the vacillations of mind is that Akram, about whose rightist views a great noise had been made, presents, as a result of pressure, a report that is full of adventurism. Unrestraint in

estimates has nothing to do with Marxism. A multisided view and an assimilation of the conditions of the party and of Iraq are needed. . . . The good thing about the Enlarged Meeting is that it put a stop to an adventurist action that would have led to a disaster.

I am for the party having its own plan for changing the condition of things, a plan that should encompass all forms of struggle, including the highest, which is armed struggle. To have one own's plan does not mean that we should ignore the others. We must not, however, let the thing rest with them. . . . The international situation, the most important characteristic of which is the dispute within the Communist movement–a factor encouraging to the imperialists–must enter into our calculations. . . . We must also bear in mind that the Arab movement is at an ebb and that there are counterrevolutions in more than one Arab country. . . . I also agree with the remark of Yāser that we should not raise too much noise about our plan, lest it be frustrated before its maturity. . . .

Daḥḥām[Mahdī ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Abu Sanā]:

The method of struggle is the way of violence . . . and violence should take three directions: 1. developing the Kurdish rising and participating in it; 2. interest in the armed forces and action in their ranks; and 3. the arming of the masses and their preparation for decisive action. . . .

The solution of the crisis through violence must be accompanied by steps to inform fraternal parties of the method of our struggle. . . . At the same time educational work would be required of them. Some journals, the *New Times* among others, spread the news of al-Bazzāz and pointed to him as the first civilian personality to rule Iraq after July 14. Congratulatory telegrams to al-Bazzāz were also published in Communist newspapers. This is a form of sanction and will have a negative effect on the morale of the Iraqi people. . . .

Ṣādeq[ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd]:

The political situation is clear. . . . All organized political forces have joined the opposition in varying degrees. But is it possible to group them in a united front with a view to producing a change in the present state of affairs? There are nationalists who still hold anti-Communist views and took part in the crimes against our party. The [Ḥarakiyyīn] form an

exception. Left-wing Ba‘thīsts have now raised the question of cooperation with us, but they are too weak and the feeling among our own masses do not permit us to work in concert with them. More than that, differences in fundamental aims and particularly on the Kurdish problem divide between us and the various other forces. . . . There are also disagreements concerning Arab unity and the questions of nationalization and of party life. At bottom, the others want us to hand over to them our forces, while they take the power for themselves. This is the direction of the Nāṣirites. They carried out two abortive attempts without informing us, which confirms their lack of interest in a concerted effort. . . . These circumstances do not help in the formation of a front, nor does the special condition of our party, which is still suffering from its wounds. The bourgeoisie does not lend any importance to a party that is weak and beset by internal struggles. . . . In my view, the first thing we have to do is to strengthen ourselves, internally, politically, on the mass level, and in every direction. . . . Side-by-side with this, we must not overlook the matter of cooperation. We must struggle to draw the other forces towards us. If they feel the mass strength of the party, . . . they will bend and come. . . .

The Kurdish revolution is of great importance to us. But it has defects. Its forces are not homogeneous. Our own capabilities in it are weak for various reasons. There is first the question of weapons. Second, the forces of the Right resist our expansion and, inasmuch as we do not wish to wage a fight against them, we retreat before them. . . . Nearly all the members of their political bureau lean to the right. Even many of the forces of “B” [Mulla Muṣṭafa al-Barzanl] incline to the right, despite their subordination to him. . . .

Were we to undertake a revolutionary initiative in the Arab sector of the country, the rightist forces will ally themselves with the enemy. There are good elements among them but the general tendency is against cooperation with us. We must not leave this out of our reckoning. We must also use every opportunity to strengthen our positions in the Kurdish revolution. Without “B” the revolution will disintegrate. But the thing that matters is that it is now an important positive factor for the maturing of the popular rising.

As to the questions that were raised concerning the formation of a special force and the delivering of a masterly blow, we have previous information on our forces in the army, which are such that we cannot even join in a small battle. I do not know how this thinking was formed. I do not know if it is fear or something else. We cannot really do anything without serious persistent action to enlarge our base in the army and form coalitions with national forces . . . and side-by-side with this make ready the potentialities of the party and the masses on every front. The question of the revolution is not a question of one day or two. . . . Even if other forces take the initiative, we must persevere with our preparations rather than throw any special force available to us as a feed to the enemy. . . .

I want to express my appreciation of the efforts of our comrades in the homeland. They have struggled to eliminate many defects and erroneous methods. . . . Exceptional circumstances have led them to take a wrong course. . . . Our ideas and suggestions to them should relate to vital matters and should not treat of this or that person. We should give them our point of view after studying what comes to us and without presenting matters sharply. Sometimes the method wastes the essence. . . . In practice, they are the ones who lead the party . . . and at the Enlarged Meeting have won the approval of the comrades. . . . We should, therefore, support them in their correct attitudes and discuss their mistakes in an unemotional and principled manner. . . .

Session of 19 November 1965

Jalīl[Zakī Khairī]:

The reports of Yāser, Fākher, and Akram do not proceed from a class standpoint. . . . These comrades have not really abāndoned their past ideas. . . . Why is their interest confined to the coup from above? Why was the question of a people's revolution by the toiling classes avoided? . . . The trouble is that the leading comrades at the party center do not want to orient the party seriously toward power. The nonclass point of view (which won through in 1959)[63] has struck roots. . . .

There are parties with no mass basis who have no other path than the coup from above led by big officers. . . . For our party this is not the only way but could well be the shortest under certain circumstances. . . .

Except for the Kurdish Democrats and al-Barzānī, no party compares with ours as regards popularity or extent of penetration in the countryside. . . .

In the reports no serious account is taken of the Kurdish revolution. Is it not keeping two-thirds of the army occupied? This is a condition without parallel in the Middle East. . . . The best support we could give it is by initiating partisan struggle in the gardens and marshes. The revolution does not depend only on mountains. I brought this up on a previous occasion in the Committee for the Organization Abroad and was answered sarcastically in one of the party's publications. . . . I said that we must keep the forces of the regime busy in the Arab sector of the country. The party's indirect retort was "that the question is not geographical." I say that there is a flaming Kurdish question, and at the same time a peasant question that we can inflame. There are areas in the countryside where the party has had strong bases for a long time, and whose masses are with the party. There are also vital lines for the enemy that we can strike. But the party dismisses these suggestions because there is no serious tendency toward power. The discussion on the possibility of a coup from above obstructs action rather than matures it. The adoption, in name, of the principle of violence is under the slogan of *mākū chārah*–" there is no alternative"–and of retreat before the pressure of the party's rank and file. Previously, he who said "Down with the Government" was regarded as an emotional adventurist. Then the watchword was accepted . . . but serious practical obstacles are now built up. . . . Without waging a struggle against the rightist ideas of the leadership, the revolutionary line cannot prevail. . . .

Even in the case of a lightninglike success, Fākher and Yāser are afraid of a monopoly of power by the party. This is the rub of the matter. Since the 1959 discussions there has been no daring for victory. Lenin himself, after having won in a decisive manner, shared power with two parties [*sic*] who withdrew of their own will. The important thing is who holds the helm? ... So long as we retain control, it makes no difference if there is only one Communist in the Council of Ministers. No Communist wants a purely Communist government. . . .

How can we win over the army? In July of 1958 only a handful of the big officers were for us. A large number of them adhered to our party only after July. Now we are asked to have big officers. Is this possible in our condition of clandestineness? The prerequisites of the reports cannot be met. If such mentality predominates, the party cannot be directed in a serious manner toward the organization of armed resistance against the existing regime. I demand a radical examination of the question. . . .

I believe that an armed revolutionary action would require a directing center that should prepare for it, politically and militarily, under the guidance of the party's secretary and should comprise elements that have a genuine and unreserved faith in the revolution . . . and an unambiguous class outlook. . . . The nucleus of this center must be drawn from comrades who have shown competence in the Kurdish partisan war and from other new elements that are familiar with the Arab regions, and particularly the countryside. Elements of this kind are available . . . and I have their names. The center should also enjoy wide prerogatives to turn party forces from peaceful routine action to armed struggle. . . .

There is a point that we cannot afford to overlook. The party was beheaded at least twice, and I do not want this to happen again. I therefore suggest that the central command be established in a secure place, . . . that is, in a place that can be defended by force of arms. . . .

Yāser says: "Revolutionary conditions in the classical sense are not at hand." I cannot maintain that there is revolutionary situation similar to that of March-April 1959, nor could such a situation be made to order. We cannot rigidly cling to just one classical example. There are other methods for maturing a people's revolution in a nonclassical revolutionary situation. Castro and his group began with eleven persons and expanded gradually. . . . If eleven could set on foot a people's revolution, why can a party like ours not begin with tens and end with thousands? . . . What better revolutionary conditions could we have when two-thirds of the army is pinned down by the Kurdish rising? A guerilla war in the Arab sector, however small, will stupefy the regime and bring the revolution to maturity.[64]

In the light of the actual circumstances of the party in 1965, the talk of some of the members of the Central Committee in Baghdād about a Communist coup from above, with or without the cooperation of other political forces, appears somewhat odd. The party counted then about five thousand members, and five or perhaps six times as many supporters–an eloquent mark, by the way, of its unusual recuperative ability. However, its active forces among the troops had become slender. In particular, it was poor in officers, and would beyond doubt have been unable to lay hold of any striking unit of the army.

No less unreal was the enthusiasm of some of the members of the Committee for the Organization Abroad for a popular peasants' war or for "the encirclement of cities": except for certain areas of the mid-Euphrates and in ʻAmārah province, the party lacked political substance in the countryside. It was still, as it had always been, a basically urban phenomenon.

It is noteworthy that although the Iraqi Communist party had formally sided with the Soviets in their dispute with the Chinese, the members of the Committee for the Organization Abroad, even the moderates among them–with the exception of ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd and possibly ʻAzīz Muḥammad-were in their ideas, impulses, and temperaments, if the deliberations at Prague are any evidence, closer to the Chinese than to the Soviet Communists. They were in their majority, in one degree or another, inclined–though some perhaps only nominally–to a path leading sooner or later to armed struggle.

Interestingly enough, the letter that was sent eventually-on 18 December 1965-to Baghdād by ʻAzīz Muḥammad, ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd, and Bāqir Ibrahīm al-Mūsawī on behalf of the Committee for the Organization Abroad reflected only partly the mood of the majority of the committee, and tended rather to steer a middle course. While incorporating the points of the left-wingers–that of ʻAzīz al-Ḥājj on the preparation for a "civil war" and that of Zakī Khairī on the need for partisan struggle in the Arab countryside–it bore more decidedly, particularly in its definition of the tasks of the moment, the imprint of ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd's deliberate and guarded approach. The letter reiterated a past warning by the committee against "any hurried action bordering on adventure," and questioned the "ripeness" of the objective conditions for an insurrectionary

Communist initiative, pointing to the swelling upwards of the "reactionary" trend on the international front and its "negative influence" upon Iraq, to the "disharmony among the national opposition groups," and to the "as yet weak impact of the party upon the masses" by reason of the losses that it had sustained. It was an error, the letter added, for the Communists to shape their plans on the basis of the probability that some party with potentialities weaker than theirs would pull a coup and get away with it:

> This idea is based on a purely mathematical comparison of forces. We are under no obligation whatsoever to be drawn into a race of this kind. Only in one case is it possible for us to take this aspect into account: an attempt by other forces to abort the revolution and that when all things would be ripe and the question is one of days only, that is, when the destiny of the country would be really decided within days. The people will not blame us . . . when we strive to spare them adventures that are bound to fail.

In a passage where its unexpressed leitmotif–Communist policy is best in the mean–becomes quite clear, the letter turns to the question of the hypothetical exclusively Communist insurrection:

> We do not subscribe to the view which asserts the need to close the door to the idea of an "independent action by the party." . . . But we point out that the formulation of this idea is the manifestation of a new, very noticeable trend in the party's policy. The idea ought to be discussed very carefully; and there is no justification for accusing those who are yet unconvinced of it of dissidence and cowardice.
>
> We should attempt to fulfill national cooperation as a stable goal in all situations. We do not look upon the possibilities of cooperation through the existing circumstances and the difficulties they present. . . . We believe that the horizons of cooperation will be larger in measure as the influence of our party increases.
>
> The party and its closest supporters . . . should, however, resort to an independent plan, if this is justified by the situation on the mass level, that is, if the struggle of the *widest* masses is, *in fact*, oriented toward the overthrow of the enemy's power while the other national forces are

> lagging in their understanding of this possibility or are rejecting it. We should be prepared for such a probable situation: the party should, in that eventuality, be able not only to carry out a masterly plan and deliver a skillful blow to the enemy, but before anything else to *mobilize enormous forces* on the popular level . . . taking into account the radicalism of the goals for which we are fighting and the comparative strength of reaction and imperialism.
>
> Considered from this angle, the party's independent plan would be an expression of, or a means to, common cooperation, by reference to: a) the slogans that the party will adopt throughout and after the rising; and b) the stand of the party in relation to the nature of the new ruling power and its form.

At one point it looked as if the letter was adopting the attitude of the left-wingers:

> We are supporters of the preparation for a popular uprising that will be achieved through the struggle of the masses themselves. Keeping in view the savagery of the enemy toward popular movements, the lengthy periods of government terrorism, and our own recent experiences in this connection, we approve totally of the idea of reliance on the effective help of the forces of "H" [the party's Military Section] in the mode of bringing about change, provided that this effective help should be a decisive factor in the attack of the mass movement rather than a substitute for it. The forces of "H" should be used at the exactly appropriate time. Their undue or wasteful employment must be absolutely avoided. Our opinion necessarily implies that the mass movement would be in a state of revolutionary upheaval, *actual readiness*, and adequate preparation. It is not correct to accept the factors of bitterness and discontent among the masses as a substitute for their effective preparation. . . .
>
> When it is thinking in terms of the organization of a violent attack upon the enemy, every revolutionary party that relies on the masses and rejects adventurism must take the civil war into account. The condition of our country in the area and the forces at the disposal of internal reaction, together with the fact that the movement led by the

> party has a distinct leftist progressive character–all these factors may arouse a brutal internal and external resistance in the face of the party. The taking into consideration of this probability requires a serious preparation for the civil war. Here the existence of the Kurdish revolt will be of help. In our opinion–basing ourselves on historical experience–the nature of the Arab part of our country can support a resistance movement different in character from that of the Kurds, with reference to its permanency and its possibilities of maneuver.

However, in the succeeding passage the letter warns against any attempt to hasten events artificially or leap over the "necessary" phases of development and the "normal maturity" of the party. The enemies of the Communists, it said, might lure them into adventures, the more easily to strike at them. Accordingly, while viewing the preparation for a popular uprising and for a "civil war" as a "strategic" duty toward which the party had to be "seriously" and "firmly" oriented, the letter did not consider these preparations as "the task of the hour." Such a trend, it added, "is incorrect, for it carries the party in a false direction and diverts it from the pressing and indispensable objectives of the present moment," which it proceeded to define as follows:

- –the study and realization of the means that will lead to the consolidation of the Kurdish revolt and to the increase of our influence and role in it;
- –the continued strengthening of our forces in the [army] without clamor;
- –the safeguarding of the [Military Section] and its development in line with the progress of the possibilities of the party and the mass movement;
- –the pursuit of our efforts for the purpose of national cooperation and the formation of alliances;
- –the conduct, in a gradual manner and without empty tumult, of an internal and mass enlightenment on the methods of our struggle;
- –the invigorating of the mass movement and its organizations–the workers' unions, the students' and women's associations, etc. . . ; the pursuit of the unification of the masses in all fields; and the utilizing of every public possibility for the stimulation of the resistance of the people

(strikes by workers and other groups, peasants' movements or rebellions, protests against the fighting in Kurdistan);

–the removal of the conspicuous deficiencies in the party . . . the issuing of the central paper at reasonable intervals . . . the fortifying of the party in the basic sectors, and the preoccupation with the training of new cadres, at home and abroad, under the supervision of the command;

–finally, the strengthening of the measures for the protection of the leadership and the party cadres and for the safeguard of the party's important secrets.[65]

In marking out these tasks, the senders of the letter were careful to indicate that they were merely offering "suggestions," but there could be no mistake that they were strongly for the application of the brakes by the Communists in Baghdād.

The Enlarged Meeting on 9-10 October 1965 drew criticisms from the Committee for the Organization Abroad, not merely on the score of the direction to which it turned the lever of the party's policy, but also on account of an unexpected change which it made in the party's leadership: in the absence of the party's secretary and the majority of the Central Committee, it formed a new "provisional" guiding center to which all the members of the Central Committee, including the absentees at Prague and Moscow, were elected, except for Nāṣir ʻAbbūd, who was dropped. It added also five new members (see Table 56-1). Under what precise influences the Enlarged Meeting acted cannot now be ascertained, but it would appear that its step reflected in part a power conflict within the upper stratum of the party in Baghdād, and in part the dissatisfaction of the middle and lower ranks of party activists with the old command. Indicative of the mood in the ranks were the proposals put before the meeting to elect a completely new leadership from outside the Central Committee, or from among the Communists who had had experience in partisan struggle, or who stood for an independent insurrection by the party.[66] The proposals were deemed, however, to be too radical and were turned down.

The action of the Enlarged Meeting provoked a sharp comment from Zakī Khairī at the session of the Committee for the Organization Abroad

held on 19 November. “The change in the leadership,” he said,

> is a dangerous precedent. It is a coup. There was no justification for robbing the prerogatives of the Central Committee in the absence of its secretary and a number of its members. . . . The Central Committee has been tested out during a long struggle. Who elected the twenty-five[67] so that they should form a new center? . . . Maybe those who were chosen are noble people, but I do not know them. . . . The powers of Comrade Ṭāreq [Nāṣir ‘Abbūd], who was removed in this improper manner, must be restored to him. I am not against the inclusion of new blood in the command . . . but this must be done in the party’s traditional way. The new elements must be nominated by the original members of the Central Committee. . . . The coup that took place is a patching operation that will not solve the leadership crisis. . . . On what basis was it carried out? Did it rest, as some reports indicate, on tribalism? Maneuvers must not be resorted to. The principle of revolutionary selection must be asserted. I have drawn the attention of the party’s secretary to the existence of unprincipled relations among the most prominent members of the party center. If a solution for this is not found, the stability of the command cannot be attained, nor would it be possible for it to lead the party with a cool head. The party suffered previously a great deal from the presence of the opposition on the level of the command, but it would seem that the present situation is even worse. At that time it was confined within the Politbureau but now the matter has gone down to the cadres. This is a dangerous situation and jeopardizes the party’s leadership of the people.[68]

The Committee for the Organization Abroad did not, however, annul the action of the Enlarged Meeting. It did view it as a “violation” of the party’s Internal Rules, inasmuch as it had been decided upon by “a minority of the Central Committee and a minority of the party cadre.” Nevertheless, it agreed that the new provisional guiding center should continue to function until the next congress of the party, or the convening of any other body[69] entitled to elect the party’s leaders.[70]

Eventually, in all likelihood at the Central Committee Plenum of April 1966, the situation was corrected. Nāṣir ʻAbbūd was reestablished. The members picked out at the Enlarged Meeting were confirmed, and eleven additional Communists were coopted. The Central Committee took the shape shown in Table 56-1. The rise in the representation at this party level of the Arab Shīʻīs and the Kurds at the expense of the Sunnī Arabs is, as will be noted from Table 56-2, very marked. So is the increase of the workers–whether as regards social origin or current occupation–at the expense of the peasants and the middle classes. The members of the professions continued, however, to be important. It is not without interest that, in its ethnic and sectarian physiognomy, the highest Communist layer was not now dissimilar from that which led the party in 1949-1955, that is, in the period which followed the party's first great disaster.

57

UNDER THE ELDER ‘ĀREF, OR THE RIFT IN THE COMMUNIST RANKS

On April 16, 1966, Major General ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, the acting chief of staff, succeeded his brother as president of the Republic. He was elected jointly by the cabinet and the National Defence Council,[1] in accordance with the provisions of an interim constitution promulgated in May 1964.

His election had not been as smooth as a public announcement issued on April 17 intimated. In the first ballot, he received only thirteen out of the total of twenty-eight votes, Premier ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān al-Bazzāz got fourteen, and the remaining vote went to the 46-year-old minister of defence, Staff Major General ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz al-‘Uqailī, an Iraqist and a conservative from the city of Mosul.[2] Eleven of the 12 officers who were present gave their votes to ‘Āref. The twelfth, al-‘Uqailī, voted for himself. At the same time, only two of the sixteen civilians cast their votes in ‘Āref’s favor, the others opting for al-Bazzāz. As no one secured the requisite two-thirds majority and the officers clung to their choice, al-Bazzāz withdrew his candidacy, thus ensuring ‘Āref’s election.[3]

Several factors assisted ‘Āref’s accession to the first place in Iraq: he was an officer; he was the brother of the late president; Cairo was said to be on his side; the military members of the National Defence Council were his brother’s nominees; and, perhaps most conclusively, the critical levers of military power and especially of the Baghdād garrison were in the hands of his tribal kinsman, Brigadier Sa‘īd Ṣlaibī. More than that, he was the least ambitious and least dangerous of the three candidates.

In all essential respects, his regime was a continuation of that of his brother. Its axis remained the Republican Guard, and its guideline the balancing of the other military forces. The Jumailīs continued, of course, to

be the backbone of the Guard. There was, however, a difference in the personalities of the two ‘Ārefs. ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān was more simple, more amiable, and less aggressive than ‘Abd-us-Salām. He was also without political instinct and lacked the energy, the cunning, and the strong powers of decision that characterized his brother. Moreover, he was not as knowledgeable as the younger ‘Āref in public affairs, or as sensitive to the slightest fluctuations in the life of the officer corps; nor could he as skillfully maneuver between competing military cliques. In some of the army circles he was spoken of disparagingly as the *Badal Ḍāye‘* (“The Substitute”),[4] and was thought to be in no way fitted to govern. He himself had not fought for power, and seemed indeed uncomfortable in his role as head of state.[5]

‘Āref’s weakness had its consequences. The government became in his time, to a greater degree than formerly, a plaything of officers’ groups, and as these groups were only nominally differentiated by ideas, but in fact revolved around self-interested persons or drew their nourishment from narrow regional loyalties, politics in the upper levels increasingly degenerated into a struggle of factions without issues. Over and above that, effective decisions passed into stronger hands. In the army the threads were held by Brigadier Ṣlaibī. In the fields of industry, petroleum, and the economy generally, things came to depend after 1966 pretty much upon Khair-ud-Dīn Ḥasīb, a Mosulite, a Nāṣirist, an ex-governor of the Central Bank, and the real author of the 1964 nationalization decrees. In political matters the prime ministers had now, in large measure, their own way.

But no premier was able to remain in power for long. The vicissitudes of the factional struggle worked against a durable governmental equilibrium. The fall of al-Bazzāz, who held office from April 18 to August 6, 1966, was, however, in a category of its own. The death of ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref, to whose personal friendship he owed his position, had left him hanging in the air. Army officers had from the first resented his presence at the head of the cabinet, not only because he was a civilian: he was too independent and too masterful a man for their taste. He had, however, artfully played upon popular feeling against the dictatorship and irrationalities of military cliques. Moreover, his June 1966 Twelve-Point Proposal, which brought the Kurdish war once more to a halt,[6] was, from the point of view of the people at large, a feather in his cap. On the other hand, his conservatism

contradicted the basic instincts of the bulk of the politically conscious Iraqis. No less disquieting was his endeavor at a partial rehabilitation of the old landed classes: he, among other things, raised from one-half to three percent the rate of interest payable to them for the lands expropriated by the government, and gave worth to the river branches flowing in the lands in question which, in effect, meant the accruing of millions of dīnārs to the dispossessed proprietors.[7] He also sought to liberalize trade and especially imports. But what above all drove the officers to close ranks and demand his removal was their fear for their privileges. His minister of finance had hinted that the army was eating up too great a part of the country's revenue: military expenditures had increased from 28.5 million dīnārs in 1956 to 85.7 million dīnārs in 1965.[8] The second try at a coup by Nāṣirite ʻĀref ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq on June 30 worked in the officers' favor. Al-Bazzāz was told that he needed "to rest." His downfall signified the collapse of the attempt at a return to civilian rule.

His successor, Retired Staff Major General Nājī Ṭāleb, an Arab Shīʻī born in 1917 in Nāṣiriyyah to a well-to-do landowner of Syrian origin, had been the second deputy chairman of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers in 1956-1958, and had held ministerial portfolios under Qāsim and in the days of the Baʻth.[9] He was now reputedly a middle-of-the-roader in his social views, and while politically he wavered between an independent nationalist attitude and a mild Nāṣirism, he had succeeded in remaining in the good graces of all the contending military factions. The government that he formed on August 9 bore more the imprint of specialism than of politics, and was composed of seven army officers[10] and twelve civilians–for the greater part, higher officials. Nājī Ṭāleb had appealed to the various nonideological military factions and to the more basic nationalist forces, the Baʻthīsts and Nāṣirites–who were beginning to surface again–to cooperate with him, but could not reconcile their contradictory demands. This proved to be only the first crack in the wheel of his government. More seriously, on December 7, by virtue of the refusal of the Iraq Petroleum Company to pay retroactive transit fee increases to Syria, the flow of Iraq's oil to the Mediterranean Sea was cut off. As the public treasury was virtually without reserves and oil royalties formed no less than 70 percent of the annual income of the state, the dispute threatened to throw the country into a severe financial crisis. While the various factions raised now much clamor

and did their best to undermine Ṭāleb's government, they did not at bottom seek to assume responsibility in that very difficult situation. But when after three long months the dispute was resolved, they began again itching for office. Their pressure attained such a degree that on May 10, 1967, ʻĀref took over the premiership himself and, to abāte the ardor of faction, nominated Ṭāher Yaḥya, ʻAbd-ul-Ghanī ar-Rāwī, Ismāʻīl Muṣṭafa, and Fūʼād ʻĀref as his deputies. Yaḥya,[11] an ex-Baʻthī, and ar-Rāwī,[12] a pan-Moslem, were themselves leaders of military cliques. Muṣṭafa, an Iraqist and a Shīʻī, was linked to ʻAzīz al-ʻUqailī", who headed the conservative "Mosul bloc of officers." But Fūʼād ʻĀref, a retired brigadier from Sulaimāniyyah, who served every postrevolutionary regime, was brought in for the Kurds' sake. The new cabinet included four other army officers: the ex-Baʻthī and now Nāṣirite ʻAbd-us-Sattār ʻAbd-ul-Latīf[13] at Interior; the apolitical Shāker Maḥmūd Shukrī at Defence; the Shīʻī ex-Commander of the Artillery Fāḍil Muḥsen al-Ḥakīm at Communications; and the Nāṣirite ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Farḥān[14] at Agrarian Reform. To these were added sixteen civilians of diverse political loyalties.

This uneasy and self-antithetical team had scarcely been put together, when it got caught in the momentous events that speeded uncontrolled and inexorably toward the military catastrophe of June 1967. When the war broke out, all the Iraqi units except for the Eighth Mechanized Brigade, which stood at H5, were at a distance of two thousand kilometers or more from the battlefield, and the brigade itself was so badly handled that it received, on its way to the front, rough treatment at the hand of enemy flyers accurately guided by enthusiastic reports on the progress of the brigade emanating from Baghdād Radio.

Iraq's participation in the war was extremely limited and its losses minimal: on the official count ten soldiers were killed and about thirty wounded.[15] On the other hand, in the eyes of the people, the whole concept of the officers' state came into disrepute. For it became obvious that by its entry into politics and its division into factions, the officer corps had not only made a mess of government or become a seedbed of political instability, but had also seriously reduced the effectiveness of the military system. Not to mention the fact that, by transforming itself into a privileged order, it had become psychologically divorced from the rest of the people. There was, however, also the growing realization that the real cause of the

Arab disaster lay much deeper; that the armed forces are fashioned by the social situation in which they have their roots; that the nation could not fight a modern, militarized, highly conscious, and extremely alert enemy with a backward mentality, a backward social system, and petty and disjoined states; that profound and fundamental social and political changes cannot be realized without long and sustained efforts and sacrifices, and massive popular participation; that, in other words, progressive ideological verbiage is not enough.

'Āref's enfeebled regime had one more year of uneasy life, which was to be dominated by the forceful figure of Ṭāher Yaḥya.[16] Called to the premiership on July 10, 1967, Yaḥya formed a cabinet which had only one advantage over its predecessor: it consisted of relatively more compatible elements–apoliticals, Nāṣirites, and independent nationalists.[17] Harassed by counterfaction and commanding no popular support, Yaḥya could make little inroad into the real ills besetting Iraq. However, upon the advice of Nāṣirite Khair-ud-Dīn Ḥasīb, he took a number of important steps to reduce the country's dangerous economic dependence upon the Western-owned Iraq Petroleum Company: on 6 August his government turned over all exploitation rights in the oil-rich North Rumailah region to the state-controlled Iraq National Oil Company;[18] on 23 November it granted to the French state concern ERAP[19] an exploration and extraction servicing contract in 10,800 square kilometers of central and southern Iraq;[20] and finally, on 24 December, it reached an agreement with the Soviet Union, which undertook to furnish technical assistance and machinery for drilling in the North Rumailah field and to help in marketing the oil produced by the nationally owned company.[21] But these steps did not do much to allay the disapproval growing around Ṭāher Yaḥya. The basic complaint against him was that his government and the regime which he served were too thinly based and stood above the authentic forces of the people. Moreover, the last months of his term of office were filled with rumors of widespread corruption. Dissatisfied merchants charged that officers were openly selling import licenses or applying the public money to their private use. The government fell so low in the general esteem that hostile satirists gave it the title of "government of *'aftarah"–a* term meaning "lawlessness" and at the same time combining the first letters of the names of the five small towns, lying to the north and northwest of Baghdād, from which many of the

officials and officers in power hailed–‘Ānah, Fallūjah, Takrīt, Rāwah, and Hīt.

From the election of ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref to the presidency in April 1966 to the war of June of 1967, the Iraqi Communist party opposed the ruling order with increasing consistency. In the days of the premiership of ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān al-Bazzāz, it set on foot a “shock” civilian unit, the “Ḥusain Section,” which it hoped to use as a supporting force, should the opportunity offer for the Military Branch of the party to pull a coup against the regime.[22] Although on 3 August 1966, after an official visit by al-Bazzāz to Moscow, the Soviet Union expressed its “deep appreciation” for his policy of nonalignment and approved “the positive steps” taken by him to put an end to the Kurdish war,[23] the party did not alter its attitude. Nor did it, after the calling of Nājī Ṭāleb to power, give up its announced aim of delivering the people from “the tyranny of the reactionary military dictatorship,”[24] despite the good wishes extended to the general by the Lebanese Communist *Al-Akhbar*.[25] On the contrary, at a February 1967 plenum, the party’s Central Committee resolved to organize small, armed, “mobile and fixed” units in the countryside and the various towns with a view to a limited guerilla struggle and the liquidation of the more “vicious” of the police chiefs.[26]

The belligerency of the Central Committee was, however, of the paper variety for, in point of fact, it took no initiative whatever against the government. By occupying a left position, it merely hoped to cushion the tremendous pressure arising from the ranks for a more militant tactic. It also sought to turn aside the threat of a grave split that had been hanging over the party.

Ever since 1959, when the leadership, in its majority, decided to link its fate and that of its followers with the fortunes of ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, there had been a division of opinion in the party which, at first, was confined within the Politbureau and the Central Committee and led, as already noted, to the appearance at that level of informal “left” and “right” wings, but which gradually spread to the intermediate and lower cadres, and eventually to the rank and file. The dispute between People’s China and the Soviet Union and the collapse of what one group of Communist oppositionists–“The Iraqi Revolutionary Assembly in Britain”–would call

the “undemocratic centralism” of the international Communist movement,[27] emboldened more and more of the dissenters to think independently and make their voices heard. For a time, in the early sixties, they came under the ideological influence of the Chinese, whose revolutionary arguments fell in with their moods, and seemed to them more consonant with their living circumstances than the pacifist and evolutionary theses of the Soviets.[28] But the strict disciplinary measures to which the leadership resorted-the expulsion of the more vocal of them and the freezing of the membership of others–were not without their effect. Moreover, the ambiguous attitude that the Chinese adopted after the tragedy that befell the party in 1963 greatly sapped Peking’s moral power. The tragedy itself pushed all differences into the background. Firm adherence to the unity of the ranks became the overriding consideration. However, in 1964 the putting forward of the “_August Line,” that is, the turning toward the regime of ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref, led to a renewal of the discontent and, in fact as we have seen, to outright insubordination. The leadership was forced to reverse itself, and in April 1965 veered sharply to the left. But below the surface the tension between the revolutionary and the traditional Moscow-oriented currents increased. In the ranks the belief gained ground that the party was faced, as a contemporary internal Communist letter put it, “with the task of great upheavals or an imminent overall purge of the command directed at the danger of ‘the adventurist left’ or ‘the revisionist right.’ This belief is a new obstruction to the progress of the party and breaks its unity.”[29]

At the heart of the opposition was a group which in due course took the name of the “Revolutionary Cadre,” and which had for its point of departure the rejection of the idea of idolizing the unity of the party at the expense of its principles. At first, the group agitated for the freedom to publish opinions opposed to official Communist policy, if only among the members of the party. But the leadership would not concede the demand. The publication of such opinions, it said “does not follow from any rule to which the party is committed” nor from “the general principles and experiences of our international Communist movement.” “Sometimes,” it added, “independent or opposing opinions are canonized and immortalized in the party in disregard of the fact that independent opinion, criticism, and the right of opposition are only starting points or means for the formation of

a unified opinion and hence a unified will of the whole party. This is the remoter goal."[30]

But it was difficult to prevent the "Revolutionary Cadre" from disseminating its views by word of mouth–and once at least in an internal official publication[31]–the more so as the leadership itself was of different minds on one or the other of the basic issues at stake in the dispute that now sharpened. By its revolutionary pharaseology, the Central Committee was able to maintain throughout 1966 the outward semblance of Communist cohesion, but after the June 1967 military disaster the inner contradictions became too deep for the party's frail solidarity to hold any longer.

On 17 September 1967, an independent Communist organization, the "Iraqi Communist Party (Central Command)," came formally into being. At its head stood a politbureau of five, with ʻAzīz al-Ḥājj ʻAlī Ḥaidar as secretary; and Hamīd Khaḍr as-Ṣāfī, an Arab *Shīʻī* tailor-worker; Aḥmad Maḥmūd al-Ḥallāq, a descendant of an Arab Sunnī barber; Kāḍhim Riḍā aṣ-Ṣaffār, an Arab Shīʻī turner; and Mattī Hindī Hindū, a Christian Orthodox Arab party worker from a well-to-do mercantile family, as members. ʻAzīz al-Ḥājj, with whose name the new organization would be popularly associated, had been born at Baghdād in 1926 to a Shīʻī Fuwailī Kurdish porter. At the age of twenty, while still a secondary schoolteacher, he was converted to Leninism and two years later, in a time of troubles for the Communists, took the party's helm into his hands. He was, however, arrested in 1948. Refusing to give his comrades away and openly defying the government before a royalist tribunal, he spent the next decade in the prisons. On his release in 1958, he was elected to the Central Committee as the *masʻūl* of Press Affairs. In mid-1959 he left the country, being deputed to Prague as representative of the party on the *World Marxist Review*. After the tragic occurrences of 1963 he played a prominent role in organizing resistance abroad to the Baʻthī government. Disapproving of the party's soft line vis-à-vis ʻAbd-us-Salām ʻĀref, he took under his wing a group of young party members who issued an oppositionist pamphlet in Prague in 1964 under the signature of "A *Lafīf* (Cluster) of Iraqi Communists," and became thus known as the "Lafīf Group." On his return to Iraq in January 1967, he was given charge of the Baghdād party organization, and in the following February elevated to the Politbureau, but he had already linked forces with the "Revolutionary Cadre." In the hope of avoiding a split in the

ranks he tried to assume the command by arresting the members of the Central Committee but, failing in his purpose, led the “Revolutionary Cadre” and its sympathizers out of the party.

It is not clear how many of the five thousand or so party members adhered to the new organization, but it is known that a substantial part of the Mid-Euphrates Party Branch, the Party Organization of ath-Thawrah town–a center of the famed Shargāwiyyas–and the workers’ cells attachéd to the Baghdād Workers’ Bureau enrolled under its banners. On the other hand, there were many Communists who, though in ideas and instincts at one with the dissidents, could, nonetheless, not bring themselves to participate in so drastic an action as the splitting of the party to which they had devoted so many years of their active life.

Upon all the fundamental questions that divided the cadres, the Communist Party (Central Command) took new, distinctive attitudes.

Most significantly, it asserted its independence within the international Communist movement without, however, abāndoning the principle of “international proletarian solidarity.” In the great dispute besetting the Communist countries, it sided neither with the Chinese nor with the Soviet Union, but at the same time set itself unqualifiedly against the reformist and for the revolutionary world currents.

With regard to the existing order, it adopted an irreconcilably hostile line, and called for “the arming of the masses,” and for “organized revolutionary violence” and “popular armed struggle in the towns and countryside,” with a view to the eventual establishment of “a government by the masses” or, as put in another formulation, “a revolutionary popular democratic regime under the leadership of the working class.”

It also declared itself for “a revolutionary Arab unity with a socialist content” and, denouncing the Soviet-supported United Nations Resolutions of November 29, 1947, on the partition of Palestine and of November 22, 1967, on the peaceful settlement of the Middle East crisis, viewed the “elimination of the racist-Zionist state in Palestine and its substitution by an Arab-Jewish democracy” as the “only possible and legitimate” solution of the problem, and “the Palestinian armed resistance movement that is progressing toward a people’s liberation war in the surrounding Arab region” as “the only means” capable of bringing the whole conflict to a favorable consummation.[32]

Perhaps the Communist Party (Central Command) struck out upon too an unrealistic a path, but it was clearly relating itself more intimately to its environment, pointing the way out of the dead-end alley to which the movement had been driven by its connection with the Soviet Union.

In view of the wide appeal of the ideas of the dissidents, the traditional organization, now popularly identified as the Communist Party (Central Committee), found itself confronted with the most serious internal challenge in its history. Its leaders met in an emergency session on 19 September 1967, and thought best, by way of an answer, to convoke the Third National Conference of the party, which duly assembled in December and was attended by fifty-seven Communists, two of them in the capacity of observers. Of the delegates, who had been elected at meetings of the provincial and local committees and the party organizations abroad, 62 percent were Arabs, 31 percent Kurds, and 7 percent from other national minorities. About one-third were also said to have been workers.[33]

The conference, while condemning the "splitters" and their "subversive" activities and campaign of "slander" against the party and its leaders, extended its hand to the "good elements" among them who, through "inadequate class consciousness," had drifted away from the party.

Turning to the situation in the Arab East, the conference took the position that the undoing of "the schemes of imperialism, Israel, and the reaction" necessitated "radical changes in the composition, policies, and ideology of the regimes in the liberated Arab countries, and especially in brotherly Egypt and Syria, which are bearing the main burden in the battle against the enemy." This would above all involve a "radical turn" by them toward "the toiling people and its revolutionary political forces" and, in the existing circumstances, the granting to these forces of "full freedom" and their inclusion in "coalition governments" based on "united democratic fronts" and "the close alliance of the workers and peasants," thus opening the way to the establishment of "revolutionary popular democratic regimes" in the future. This applied *pari passu* to Iraq. Such fronts and coalition governments were bound to smooth the path to a greater solidarity between the liberated Arab countries and, in the end, through appropriate forms of federal links, to progress along the road toward "a comprehensive Arab unity."

In its approach to a settlement of the Middle East conflict, the conference adhered closely to the line of the U.A.R. and the Soviet Union:

> To confine efforts solely to a military solution or solely to a political solution reflects a want of realism and of a sense of responsibility for the fate of the Arab homeland. To speak of the people's war as the only way and obdurate negativeness on the part of any Arab country toward the coordination of Arab attitudes or the mobilization of Arab fighting potentialities cannot but harm the Arab and international efforts aimed at isolating the enemy and eliminating the consequences of his criminal aggression.

The conference took Iraq's "dictatorial regime" to task for its "token" participation in the June War, and for "dissipating" the strength of the army in "repeated aggressive acts against the Kurdish people," and through the "imprisonment, killing, or dismissal from the military ranks of thousands of efficient patriotic officers and soldiers." It also rebuked it for its "tendency to bargain with the national interests," which the oil agreement with ERAP and the opening of Iraq's markets to French and Italian capital had "exposed." "It is proper and indispensable," it said "for an independent popularly backed revolutionary government to exploit contradictions between the imperialist powers, but this is scarcely safe when practiced by a government that is dictatorial, weak, and isolated from the people and could impair the country's national independence."[34]

The conference did not omit to reaffirm its ideological solidarity with the Soviets or to express its gratitude for their support to the party in 1963 or to the Arab peoples in 1967. But the Soviets do not appear to have been happy about its attacks upon the Iraqi regime. On 27 February 1968, scarcely a week after its broadcast in full of the resolutions of the conference, the "Voice of the Iraqi People," which had its transmitters in Eastern Europe, went off the air. A final announcement attributed this development to the party's recovery of its power and its reentry into "the field of struggle."[35] But the closing down of the station seemed to provide another argument in favor of the initiative that the dissidents of the "Central Command" group had taken.

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THE SECOND BA‘THĪ REGIME

The Ba‘thīsts returned to power by pulling two coups, one on July 17 and the other on July 30, 1968. In the first they got rid of ‘Āref by allying themselves with his closest aides. In the second they cast out the more inconvenient of these chance allies. In both instances they prevailed by stratagem rather than through force.

While the coup of July 30 was purely Ba‘thī in conception, that of July 17 appears to have been a many-sided affair and is, in some of its aspects, rather vague. ‘Āref himself believes that at least one of its threads was in non-Iraqi hands. Viewed exclusively in the light of the identity of the elements that actually carried it out, it could be described as in essence a coup from within ‘Āref’s regime. The key role in the act of overturn itself was played not by the Ba‘th party but by the “Clique of Palace Officers” or the “Arab Revolutionaries,” as they styled themselves. The nucleus of this clique consisted of ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq an-Nāyef, Ibrahīm ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ad-Dāūd, and Sa‘dūn Ghaidān. All three were lieutenant colonels and appointees and friends of the regime’s strong military man, Brigadier Sa‘īd Ṣlaibī. All occupied sensitive posts in the existing structure: an-Nāyef dominated the military intelligence network; ad-Dāūd stood at the head of the Republican Guard, the real shield of ‘Āref’s position; Ghaidān commanded the tank regiment attachéd to the Republican Guard. All were of an intermediate social rank, and by birth or origin from ar-Ramādī, ‘Āref’s and Ṣlaibī’s home province: an-Nāyef had been born in Fallūjah to a middle landowner, ad-Dāūd in Hīt to a man of religion, and Ghaidān in Baghdād to a police commissioner from ar-Ramādī. An-Nāyef, it will also be remembered, was a cousin of Ṣlaibī and belonged, like Ṣlaibī, to aj-Jumailah, ‘Āref’s tribe.

An-Nāyef and ad-Dāūd, in particular, were on very intimate terms with ʻĀref. “They were,” ʻĀref would say later, “constantly by my side, especially in the evenings, and on more than one occasion protested: ‘We are your brothers! You can count on us! We will risk our lives for your sake!’”[1] They were, in short, the last persons from whom he expected betrayal.

What seduced these men from the loyalty they owed to ʻĀref and prompted them to turn against him?

In ʻĀref’s view, an-Nāyef was in this thing but a tool whetted with money. The principal oil companies in the country and the powers that stand behind them, he believes, had, since the grant of the oil contract to ERAP and the reaching of the technical assistance understanding with the Soviet Union for the development of the North Rumailah oil field, begun seeking agents to work the ruin of his government. His denial of a sulfur concession to the Pan-American Company was, he said, one more item that they laid to his account. In the end they found in an-Nāyef the very man they needed: “they bought him through Saudi Arabia and by the intermediary of Bashīr Ṭāleb, the military attaché in Beirut and the ex-commander of the Republican Guard, and of Nāṣir al-Ḥānī, Iraq’s ambassador to Lebanon.” ʻĀref intimated that he was affirming this with knowledge and not upon mere suspicion.[2]

Ad-Dāūd, whom an-Nāyef induced to join him, was a man of a different stamp. Venality, it would seem, had no hold upon him. Influenced by obscurantist men of religion, he hated anything suggestive of socialism. But the chief factor in his abāndonment of ʻĀref was his fear of the Nāṣirites. He had been instrumental in the defeat of the attempt that they made in 1966 to capture the government. Despite his remonstrances, ʻĀref had, after the June War, set them free and reinstated many of them in their old or in analogous positions. “Taking advantage of the goodness of your heart,” ad-Dāūd recurrently complained to him, “they are penetrating more and more deeply into the army. One day they will take the power and send us to the gallows.”[3] The same apprehensions were at work in the case of Bashīr Ṭāleb and an-Nāyef, who also had had a hand in the scattering of the Nāṣirite plan.

Through the third figure in the “Clique of Palace Officers,” Saʻdūn Ghaidān, who had in 1963 briefly flirted with the Baʻth party, ad-Dāūd,

being unsure of success, linked up with the Ba‘th Military Bureau, which had been feeling for weaknesses in the Republican Guard to smooth the way for an initiative of its own.

Acting separately, the palace clique and the Ba‘th could well have missed their aims. United, they achieved easy triumph. One circumstance facilitated their work: the regime’s key military man, Sa‘īd Ṣlaibī, was in ill health and undergoing medical tests in London.

At the concerted hour, that is, at two in the morning of July 17, Sa‘dūn Ghaidān introduced in his own car into the quarters of the Republican Guard’s Tank Regiment, which he commanded, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Ḥardān ‘Abd-ul-Ghaffār at-Takrītī, Ṣāleḥ Mahdī‘Ammāsh, and Anwar ‘Abd-ul-Qāder al-Hadīthī; and with the help of other Ba‘thī officers, whom he also admitted, secured complete control of the regiment.

Simultaneously, ad-Dāūd occupied Broadcasting House with a number of tanks and a battalion of the Republican Guard. An-Nāyef, for his part, took hold of the Ministry of Defence.

When, at about 3:30 A.M., ‘Āref was aroused by a subaltern, Premier Ṭāher Yaḥya and the other figures of the regime had been rounded up, and power had effectively passed into other hands. After a little hesitation and five warning shots from tanks now encircling the presidential palace, ‘Āref realized that resistance was pointless, and made a ready surrender. Six hours later he was placed on an airplane to join his ailing wife in England.

At 7:28, the customary Proclamation No. 1 was put out. Except for the noticeable lack of any reference to the July 14 Revolution, it was in a routine vein. It gave the purposes of the leaders of the coup a graceful covering, and held out expectations of a solution of the Kurdish problem and of “equal opportunities” and “a democratic life” for the citizens and of the triumph of “the rule of law.” It also approved of the Palestine guerillas, and called for the fixing of the responsibility for the Arab catastrophe of 1967. Otherwise, it was distinguished by the extreme acrimony of its Abuse of the outgoing rulers, whom it damned as “a clique of ignoramuses, illiterates, profit-seekers, thieves, spies, Zionists, suspects, and agents.”[4]

The people met the change of government with utter indifference. They had grown tired of the officers’ power game, of their communiques no. 1, and their wearisome and tasteless rhetoric. The whole thing seemed so distant from them, and from the difficulties of their everyday life and the

general conditions of the nation. They were simply unable to see the point of it all.

Dissensions set in between the Ba‘th and its partners even before the removal of ‘Āref. The party had had no inkling that an-Nāyef was in the plot until July 15, when it also learned that he and ad-Dāūd had agreed between them that an-Nāyef should be the new premier.[5] It had apparently hoped to unite the authority attachéd to this position and the office of president of the Republic in the person of Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr but, realizing that the fate of the entire venture rested on the role of the Republican Guard and its commander, ad-Dāūd, it accorded reluctantly and with certain mental reservations what it had no power to deny. Only the presidency fell to its lot. By way of compensation, it tried to obtain the portfolio of defence, that is, the *de facto* headship of the armed forces; but the place went to ad-Dāūd. In the end it had to content itself with the posts of chief of staff and commander of the air force, both of which Ḥardān ‘Abd-ul-Ghāffar at-Takrītī filled. It also got control of the police and internal security, that is, of the office of minister of interior, to which Ṣāleḥ Mahdī ‘Ammāsh was named. On the other hand, the command of the Republican Guard was given to Sa‘dūn Ghaidān.

In the cabinet, eight out of twenty-six seats were occupied by members or supporters of the Ba‘th party[6] and eight others by nominees of the “Clique of Palace Officers,” including Nāṣir al-Ḥānī, a diplomat and literary critic, at Foreign Affairs.[7] The cabinet also comprised the leader of the Moslem Brotherhood ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Zaidān,[8] two veteran Free Officers,[9] three conservative specialists,[10] and four Kurds, including Muḥsen Dīza’ī, a personal representative of Mulla Muṣṭafa al-Barzānī.[11]

In its first days, the new cabinet seemed unable to make any headway. Its two basic component forces had little in common and were pulling it in opposite directions. This did not escape the public in Baghdād, for *Ath-Thawrah*, the organ of the “palace clique,” was saying one thing and the Ba‘thī *Aj-Jumhūriyyah* another. But soon it looked as if matters were going the way of an-Nāyef and ad-Dāūd. Rightwing papers in Beirut, who had not concealed their sympathy for the premier and the defence minister, began to anticipate the cancellation of the ERAP contract and the return of the North Rumailah field to the Iraq Petroleum Company. Pan-American was also

expected to get the sulfur concession.[12] Later, the Ba‘thīsts would accuse their opponents of having proposed at a cabinet meeting the liquidation of the state-owned National Oil.[13] In the meantime, on 22 July, upon the instructions of the minister of culture, *Ath-Thawrah* was merged with *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, and the Ba‘thīsts on *Aj-Jumhūriyyah’s* editorial staff cast out. Simultaneously, their party was denied access to Baghdād Radio.[14]

While this was taking place in the front of the political stage, in the back part the Ba‘thīsts, by their skillful manipulation of circumstances, were altering the military balance to their advantage. Exploiting, it is said, ad-Dāūd’s slowness to move–he apparently did not take the Ministry of Defence in hand until three days after the coup–they were able, through Ḥardān at-Takrītī, the chief of staff, to effect enough transfers and appointments in the army and adopt such other measures as to protect themselves from any contingency. Turning also to account an-Nāyef’s and ad-Dāūd’s neglect of their friend, Sa‘dūn Ghaidān, they won him over to their side, and thereby gained a leverage over the Republican Guard or, in other words, pulled the support of an-Nāyef and ad-Dāūd from under their feet. More than that, they cultivated the goodwill of Brigadier Ḥammād Shehāb at-Takrītī, the commander now of the Baghdād garrison, and on the day of the coup, of the Tenth Armored Brigade, the unit nearest to the capital and which was already thick with sympathizers of the party. Within less than a fortnight, the correlation of forces in the army had so changed that all the Ba‘thīsts needed was a brief and bold stroke. The absence of ad-Dāūd on an official visit to Jordan eased the way for them. The stroke fell on July 30. Tanks of the Tenth Brigade rolled into Baghdād, occupying all key points. Premier an-Nāyef was packed out of the country and his cabinet dismissed. Sovereignty passed to the Ba‘thīsts.[15]

The Ba‘th party that has since 1968 been uppermost in the affairs of Iraq differs in important respects from the Ba‘th party that took the power in 1963.

True, there have been continuities in its life. It is still committed to the construction of a “unified Arab socialist society.”[16] It still views itself as the “vanguard” or the “commanding party.”[17] It is also, as yet, élitist in character: the circle of organized supporters continues to be broad, in fact, has reached down to Iraq’s villages and in 1976 embraced, according to the

Ba‘thīsts, no fewer than 500,000,[18] while the “active membership”[19] is, as formerly, highly exclusive and counts, in all probability, scarcely more than 10,000, and within this class the old Ba‘thīsts and the direct participants in the 1959 attempt against Qāsim’s life and in the coups of 1963 and 1968 have higher standing and greater opportunities than others. More than that, before attaining “active membership,” inferior Ba‘thīsts have to go through a course of training at *Madrasat-ul-I‘dād-il-Ḥizbī-the* School for Party Preparation.

All the same, the party has greatly changed. Up to November 1963 it had, to a large extent, the characteristic of a genuine partnership between the Sunnī and Shī‘ī “pan-Arab” youth. By 1968, however, the role of the Sunnīs had risen sharply, while that of the Shī‘īs had decisively declined. As can be seen from Table 58-1, out of the total of fifty-three members of the top command that led the party from November 1963 to 1970, 84.9 percent were Sunnī Arabs, 5.7 percent Shī‘ī Arabs, and 7.5 percent Kurds, whereas for the period 1952-November 1963, the comparable figures were 38.5; 53.8; and 7.7 percent. A similar process appears to have taken place in the intermediate and lower layers of the “active membership.” This means, of course, that the party has become more homogeneous, but at the same time less representative.

The Shī‘īs lost their weight partly because many of them backed ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī when, hard on the heel of the party crisis of November 1963, he challenged the authority of Michel ‘Aflaq and blamed him for the party’s defeat; and when in 1964, on being read out of the Ba‘th, he formed a group of his own, “the Committee for the Iraqi Region,” which eventually took the name of the Revolutionary Workers’ party but, torn by faction, rapidly dwindled into insignificance.

However, the chief reason for the decline of the Shī‘īs lay in the discriminatory practices of the police. Ba‘thīsts belonging to this sect were, after the 1963 coup by ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref, on the whole more systematically hunted than their Sunnī comrades and, when nabbed, treated with severity, whereas the latter frequently escaped with light sentences. The explanation for this is to be sought not so much in sectarian prejudice as in the fact that Sunnī Ba‘thīsts were often from the same town or province or tribe as the members of the police, for the departments of Interior and Security teemed with functionaries from the province of ar-

Ramādī and the northern districts of Baghdād province, from which many Ba‘thīsts also hailed. This situation was a carry-over from the days of the monarchy, when such directors general of police as ‘Abd-uj-Jabbār ar-Rāwī and Bahjat ad-Dulaimī–both by origin from ar-Ramādī-facilitated, it would seem, the entry of their kinsfolk and clansmen into the service under their control.

Another change in the character of the Ba‘th not entirely unconnected with its transformation into a virtually Sunnī party is the comparative increase in the influence upon it–the comparison is with its 1963 situation–of army officers and especially Takrītī army officers. Impressions, recently formed, of the assertion of civilian primacy over the military do not appear to be factually grounded, despite the increase after mid-1973 in the role of the civilian wing of the party in the affairs of government. So long as the Ba‘th continues to be characterized by the insubstantiality of its ideological links and the volatility of its mass support, its ultimate reliance on the army is inescapable.

The advance of the Takrītīs in the party’s military branch, that is, the rise in the significance of local connections, has, of course, something to do with the tenuousness of the ideological ties just referred to. This factor–Takrītization–was already at work in 1963, but is now intensified and could more directly be explained by the passing of the leadership of the Ba‘th in 1964 into the hands of Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr and Ṣaddām Ḥusain who, being both from Takrīt, tended to attract into the party those with whom they had close social or personal relationships, that is, often men who by birth or descent were from their own town. This, as we have had occasion to note in the instance of other political forces, is a perfectly natural manner of procedure.

To the extent that the Ba‘th is what its leaders are or make it, it could be said to have changed in one further sense: the Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr of 1973 is wiser and more seasoned than the Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr of 1963, and the traits of Ṣaddām Ḥusain differ significantly from those of ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī.

Al-Bakr is not a figurehead, as is sometimes put about. In 1963 he was not, it is true, the moving force of the party. This was a role that as-Sa‘dī filled. Today, however, he possesses great authority among Ba‘thīsts and in the army and government. But he has the aptitude more of a political

moderator than of a maker of policy. He also tends to keep aloof from intraparty conflicts. When differences, however, become irreconcilable, his is indubitably the last word. He is, it should be added, as Moslem in his point of view as the younger ʻĀref was. This found a clear expression in such provisions of the Interim Organic Law of 1968 as the following: "Islam . . . is the fundamental principle of the constitution" (Article 4); "the family is the basis of society and derives its sustenance from religion, ethics, and patriotism" (Article 8); "inheritance is a right governed by the holy law" (Article 17b).[20] As in many who are of the military profession–ʻĀrefites, Baʻthīsts, and others–so in al-Bakr too, the belief in Islam goes hand in hand with at least a theoretical attachment to the pan-Arab ideal ("the Iraqi people is part of the Arab nation and has for objective a comprehensive Arab unity"[21]) and a commitment to a mild form of middle-class socialism ("the application of a social justice preclusive of any kind of exploitation"; the upholding of private property and "the regulation of its social function by law"; and a "guided" national economy based on "the cooperation of the public and private sectors").[22]

TABLE 58-1

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to the Members of the Command of the Baʻth Party in the Iraqi Region, 1952 to 1970 (Summary of Table A-49)

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin	Commands of 1952 to November 1963				Commands of November 1963 to 1970				Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq
	No. of members[a]	%	No. of individuals[b]	%	No. of members[a]	%	No. of individuals[b]	%	
Moslems									
Shīʻī Arabs	28	53.8	12	46.2	3	5.7	3	14.2	44.9
Sunnī Arabs	20	38.5	13	50.0	45[c]	84.9	16[c]	76.2	28.6
Kurds	4[d]	7.7	1[d]	3.8	4[e]	7.5	1[e]	4.8	12.7
Turkomans	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3.4
Persians	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	3.3
Jews	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	.3
Christians	–	–	–	–	1	1.9	1	4.8	6.4
Sabeans	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	.1
Total	52	100.0	26	100.0	53	100.0	21	100.0	100.0

Education

Members elevated to the Command in the period 1952-1963

	No. of individuals[b]
College	33
Secondary	3
Elementary	1
Total	37

Members elevated to the Command in the period 1964-1970

	No. of individuals[b]
College	5
Secondary	5
Total	10

Sex (all commands)

	No. of individuals[b]
Male	47
Female	–
Total	47

Age Group in Year of Accession to Command[f]

	Commands of 1952 to Sept. 1963	*Commands of Sept. 1963 to 1970*
	No. of individuals[b]	*No. of individuals*[b]
20-24 years	12	–
25-29 years	10	11
30-34 years	2	5
35-39 years	–	2
48-49 years	–	2
No information	–	3
Total	24	23

Class Origin (all commands)

		No. of individuals[b]	%
No information		1	2.1
Classes of low income		12	25.5
Peasants	6		
Workers	4		
Official	1		
Vendor	1		
Classes of lower middle income		18	38.3
Officials	2		
Tradesmen	6		
Artisan	1		
Petty landowners	5		
Man of religion	1		
Petty agricultural entrepreneur	1		
Member of profession	2		
Classes of middling income		14	29.8
Middling officials	3		
Middling merchants	6		
Aristocratic impoverished landowner	1		
Middling landowners	3		
Landed man of religion	1		
Classes of high income		2	4.3
Landowning shaikhs	2		
Total		47	100.0

Occupation (all commands)

		No. of individuals[b]	%
Army officers[g]		7	14.9
Major generals	2		
Brigadier	1		
Colonels	2		
Lieutenant colonel	1		
Major	1		
Civilians			
Members of professions		22	46.8
Schoolteachers[h]	9		
College professor[h]	1		
Physicians	4		
Engineers[i]	3		
Lawyers	4		
Journalist	1		
Students		3	6.4
Government or Municipal officials		3	6.4
Bank employees		3	6.4
Bookstorekeeper		1	2.1
Worker		1	2.1
Party workers		7	14.9
Total		47	100.0

Place of Birth or Origin		No. of individuals[b]	%
Baghdād Province		23	48.9
Baghdād	11		
al-A'ẓhamiyyah	2		
Takrīt	6		
Sāmarrā'	2		
ad-Dūr	2		
Ramādī Province		7	14.9
'Ānah	4		
Ramādī	2		
al-Alūs	1		
Karbalā Province		4	8.5
Karbalā'	3		
Najaf	1		
Nāṣiriyyah Province		4	8.5
Nāṣiriyyah	4		
Mosul Province		2	4.3
Mosul	2		
Ḥillah Province		2	4.3
Dīwāniyyah Province		2	4.3
Diyālah Province		1	2.1
Baṣrah Province		1	2.1
Irbid, Jordan		1	2.1
Total		47	100.0

[a]In this column, individuals are counted as many times as the number of terms for which they were appointed or elected to the command.

[b]In this column, individuals, who were elected or appointed to the command for more than one term, are counted only once.

[c]Includes 1 Arabo- Turkoman.

[d]Arabized Fuwailī (Shī'ī) Kurd.

[e]Arabized Kurds.

[f]Approximate.

[g]Rank in year of access to Ba'th Command.

[h]Employed by the government.

[i]Two of whom were employed by the government.

Ideologically, Ṣaddām Ḥusain is of the same mold, despite the quarter of a century that separates him from al-Bakr: Ṣaddām was born in 1937, al-Bakr in 1914. But Ṣaddām and al-Bakr are united by something more than a common background of belief. Both belong to al-Begāt section of the Albū Nāṣir tribe.[23] They are also closely related: Ṣaddām is the foster son,[24] nephew, and son-in-law of Khairallah aṭ-Ṭulfāḥ, the governor of Baghdād and a second cousin of al-Bakr. It is partly upon this relationship that Ṣaddām's political position rests. In addition, al-Bakr and Ṣaddām share a number of traits: they are very reserved, and, on the whole, not prone to hasty judgments or rigid attitudes. Ṣaddām, however, surpasses al-Bakr in boldness, strength of will, and nimbleness of mind. Moreover, though al-Bakr could on occasion be ruthless, Ṣaddām is of a tougher fiber and is generally more feared. An old rumor, which is still in circulation, accuses him of having killed, in the years before his rise to power, one of his kinsmen in a tribal feud, as well as a warrant officer, one Sa'dūn at-Takrītī, who had charge of the Communist organization in Takrīt. These things he might or might not have done, but he did take an active part, when only a student, in the attempt upon Qāsim's life in 1959. Wounded during the incident by the fire of his comrades, he extracted, in the car that sped away from the scene, a bullet from his leg with his own knife. The attempt established his reputation in the Ba'th party, with which he had been connected since 1955, and could be viewed as the first salient point in his political career. What came after that could be rapidly recounted. Pursued by Qāsim's police, he took refuge first in Damascus and then in Cairo. In 1961 he was arrested by the Egyptian authorities for allegedly threatening to kill a fellow countryman of Nāṣirite sympathies, but was released on the personal interference of President Nāṣir. Two years later, at the Ba'th Sixth National Congress, he stood firmly against 'Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa'dī and on the side of Michel 'Aflaq who, probably for this reason, recommended in 1964 his elevation to the foremost role in the party. At the present time, al-Bakr is the secretary general of the Ba'th Iraqi Command, and Ṣaddām the assistant secretary general; but in effect the party is in Ṣaddām's hands, just as the army is in al-Bakr's,* and though Ṣaddām occupies no official position in the government other than that of deputy chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council–the chairman is al-Bakr–he to all intents and purposes functions as first minister, controls the departments of Internal Security and

Military Intelligence through his control of the party's National Security Bureau, and is beyond question the second most important man in the country.

The Sunnī and Takrītī characteristics of the Ba'th party and its ultimate dependence on officer-Ba'thīsts have left their impress upon the regime that it brought forth.

To this clearly points the composition of the Revolutionary Command Council which, legally, is the highest state organ and at the same time the repository of crucial power, uniting the commanding heights of the party, army, and government.[25]

Beginning on July 30, 1968, as a body of five, the council was enlarged to fifteen on November 9, 1969 only to be reduced to eleven in 1970, nine in 1971, seven in 1973, six in 1974, and five in 1977.[26] But throughout its members were all Sunnīs (see Tables 58-2 and 58-3).

Army officers occupied the five original seats. Although since 1969 their proportion has been lower than that of the civilians or, for that matter, of the military on the 1963 Revolutionary Council (see Table 55-1), their votes carried, at least until June 1973, more weight than the votes of their counterparts in 1963 or of their civilian colleagues, the vote of Ṣaddām Ḥusain excepted. Again, save for the special position of Ṣaddām which, unlike that of 'Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa'dī in 1963, rests, as has already been indicated, not so much on the strength of the civilian component of the party as on his family connections with Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr and his control of the special apparatus of the party's National Security Bureau, army officers held until 1973 all the key offices in the state–the presidency and premiership, the command of the armed forces, and the portfolios of defence and interior. However, in 1974 Interior passed into the hands of a civilian Ba'thīst.[27]

TABLE 58-2

Members of Revolutionary Command Council, July 1968 to September 1977

Name	*Position in government, army, and party*	*Nation and sect*
General Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr (chairman)[a]	President of the Republic; commander-in-chief of the armed forces; secretary general, Ba'th Regional Command; member, Ba'th Pan-Arab Command; minister of defence 1973-1977	Arab, Sunnī
Ṣaddām Ḥusain (deputy chairman)[b,c]	Asst. secretary general, Ba'th Regional Command with informal supervisory powers over internal security and military intelligence	Arab, Sunnī
Air Staff Major General Ḥardān 'Abd-ul-Ghaffār[a,d,e]	Deputy commander-in-chief of armed forces & deputy premier and minister of defence (1968-70); deputy president of Republic (1970)	Arab, Sunnī
Staff Lieutenant General Ṣāliḥ Mahdī 'Ammāsh[a,f]	Deputy premier; minister of interior (1968-70); deputy president of Republic (1970-71); member Ba'th Regional Command & Pan-Arab Command till 1971; ambassador to Moscow	Arab, Sunnī
Major General Ḥammād Shehāb[a,h]	Chief of the General Staff of army (1968-70); minister of defence (1970-73)	Arab, Sunnī
Major General Sa'dūn Ghaidān[a]	Commander of the Baghdād garrison (1968-70); minister of interior (1970-74); minister of communications (1974-date)	Arab, Sunnī
'Abd-ul-Karīm ash-Shaikhlī[b,f]	Minister for foreign affairs; member Ba'th Regional Command and Ba'th Pan-Arab Command till 1971; chief delegate, U.N.	Arabized Kurd, Sunnī
'Abdallah Salīūm as-Sāmarrā'ī[b,d]	Minister of information (1968-69); minister of state; member Ba'th Regional Command till 1970; ambassador to India	Arab, Sunnī
Dr. 'Izzat Muṣṭafa[b,ℓ]	Member Ba'th Regional Command till 1977; minister of health (1968-69); minister of labor 1976; minister of municipalities 1977	Arab, Sunnī
Shafīq al-Kamalī[b,d]	Minister of youth; member Ba'th Pan-Arab Command till 1970; minister of information (1970-72)	Arab, Sunnī
'Abd-ul-Khāliq as-Sāmarrā'ī[b,j]	Member Ba'th Regional Command and Ba'th Pan-Arab Command (1968-73)	Arab, Sunnī
Ṣalāḥ 'Umar al-'Alī[b,d]	Member Ba'th Regional Command; minister of guidance (March-July 1970)	Arab, Sunnī
'Izzat ad-Dūrī[b]	Member Ba'th Regional Command; minister of agrarian reform (1969-74); minister of interior (1974-date)	Arab, Sunnī

Date and place of birth	Class origin	Education	Regular or former occupation
1914, Takrīt	Petty landowning class; son of a notable of al-Begāt, a tribal group in Takrīt	Military Academy	Army officer.
1937, Takrīt	Peasant class; son of a peasant from al-Begāt tribal group	Completed 3 years at Law School; continued studies while in office, obtaining a law degree in 1971	Schoolteacher; party worker.
1925, Takrīt	Rural petty official class; son of a policeman from Takrīt's Shiyāyshah tribal group	Aviation School; Staff College	Air force officer.
1925, Baghdād	Lower agricultural entrepreneurial class; son of a peasant-*qammān*g	Military Academy; Staff College	Army officer.
1925,[i] Takrīt	Lower landowning class; son of a small landowner	Military Academy	Army officer.
1929,[i] Baghdād; originally from Ramādī	Official lower middle class; son of a police commissioner	Military Academy	Army officer.
1935,[i] Baghdād; originally from Sulaimāniyyah	Lower professional middle class; son of a schoolteacher	Completed 2 years at Medical School	Party worker.
1932, Sāmarrā'	Petty official class; son of a policeman	B.A. education; M.A. Islamic history	Schoolteacher.
? , 'Ānah	Lower landowning class; son of a small landowner	Medical School	Physician.
1932,[i] Albū Kamāl	Petty trading class; son of a tradesman	College of Arts; M.A. Arab literature, Cairo	Schoolteacher.
1935,[i] Sāmarrā'	Working class; son of a worker	Secondary school	Party worker.
1938,[i] Takrīt	Petty landowning class; son of small landowner	Secondary school	Municipal clerk.
1942, ad-Dūr (Sāmarrā' district)	Lower vending class; son of a seller of ice	Secondary school	Party worker.

Name	Position in government army, and party	Nation and sect
Murtaḍa al-Ḥadīthī[b,k]	Member Ba'th Regional Command; minister of labor (1970-71); of economics (1971); of foreign affairs (1971-74)	Arab, Sunnī
Ṭaha aj-Jazrāwī[b]	Member Ba'th Regional Command; ex-secretary party's Military Section; minister of industry (1972-76); minister of public works and housing since 1976	Arab, Sunnī

Date and place of birth	*Class origin*	*Education*	*Regular or former occupation*
1939,[i] Baghdād; originally from Takrīt	Lower landowning class; son of a small landowner	B.A. history; completed 4 years at School of Medicine	Schoolteacher; party worker.
1939,[i] Mosul	Peasant class; son of a gardener	Secondary school	Bank clerk; party worker.

[a]Appointed to the Revolutionary Command Council in July 1968.

[b]Appointed to the Revolutionary Command Council in November 1969.

[c]Ṣaddām Ḥusain is the nephew and son-in-law of Khairallah al-Ṭulfāḥ, a first cousin of Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, and the governor of Baghdād.

[d]Dropped from Revolutionary Command Council in 1970.

[e]Assassinated in Kuwait, 30 March 1971.

[f]Dropped from Revolutionary Command Council in September 1971.

[g]A type of peasant-entrepreneur.

[h]Slain in the coup attempt of 30 June 1973.

[i]Approximate date.

[j]Divested of powers and sentenced to life imprisonment 9 July 1973.

[k]Dropped from Revolutionary Command Council in 1974.

[l]Dismissed from Revolutionary Command Council, March 1977.

No less significant is the representation of the Takrītīs on the council. In 1968-1969, they occupied three out of the five and in 1969-1970, six out of the fifteen seats. In mid-1973 they constituted four of the nine members of the council and, as is evident from Tables 58-2 and 58-4, held not only all the foremost posts in the party, army, and government, but also, among other things, the portfolio of defence, the governorship and Security Department of Baghdād, and the commands of the air force, the Baghdād garrison, the Ḥabbaniyyah air base, and the tank regiment of the Republican Guard. Their role continues to be so critical that it would not be going too far to say that the Takrītīs rule through the Ba‘th party, rather than the Ba‘th party through the Takrītīs.

But how have the Takrītīs come to be superior to others in power and authority? For one thing, there is a great number of them in the army. This fact is not unrelated to the impoverishment of the inhabitants of Takrīt caused by the decline in the production of *kalaks–rafts* of inflated skins–for which their town was renowned in the nineteenth century. To earn their

living, many moved to Baghdād and settled in what is known today as the quarter of at-Takārtah. Some found employment as railway construction workers or labored on the K2-Baijī-Ḥadīthah oil pipeline. Others, however, were able to gain admission into the cost-free Royal Military Academy.

For this they had to thank Mawlūd Mukhliṣ, a protégé of Faiṣal I and a vice-president of the Senate under the monarchy. This was not the whole of Mukhliṣ. He had been many other things: a classmate of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd at the Isṭanbūl War College in 1903-1906; a member in 1914-1915 of the secret independence-minded al-‘Ahd (“The Covenant”); a commander of an Ottoman cavalry unit at Shu‘aybah and Kūt during World War I, whom the Turks arrested in 1916 and accused of espionage on behalf of the English, but to whom Colonel G. E. Leachman, a political officer in the Indian army, afforded the means of escape; a fighter in the army of Sharīf Ḥusain of Mecca, who was wounded eight times; and a “red-hot nationalist” who took a conspicuous part in stirring up the 1920 Revolt.[28] Although between 1922 and 1925 he associated himself with the oppositionist National party, he continued to be kindly looked upon by Faiṣal I, and remained a man of the highest connections till his death in the fifties. This influence he used in favor of the Takrītīs in view of the many links that tied him to them: he had been born in Mosul (in 1886) but to a *kalakchī* (maker of *kalaks)* from Takrīt; he married a Takrītī girl, a kinswoman of Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr; and the abundant good land that he acquired as a reward for his services to the Hashemite family was situated in the Takrīt district.

But the introduction by Mawlūd Mukhliṣ of so many Takrītīs into the officer corps only partly explains the relative strength of their present position. For the understanding of their rise to first rank, it is necessary also to refer to the frequent comb-outs in the army. No fewer than three thousand officers have been pensioned off since the Revolution of 1958. Military royalists were swept away in the days that followed the destruction of the monarchy. The position of the officer-Iraqists was badly shaken by the fall of Qāsim in 1963. The Mosulites lost some ground after the failure of the bid for the presidency made by their leader, General ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz al-‘Uqailī, in 1966, but took a more severe blow after his arrest in 1969. The turn of the Ramādī officers, who linked their fate with that of the ‘Āref brothers or with the group of ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq an-Nāyef and Ibrahīm ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ad-Dāūd, had come in 1968. All these things redounded to the

advantage of the Takrītīs. Even then, they now occupy a place out of all proportion to their numerical importance, so that, like their predecessors, they have to resort to balancing tactics and repeated shufflings of military commands.

TABLE 58-3

Summary of the Biographical Data Relating to the Members of the Revolutionary Command Council, July 1968 to 1977

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	No.	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq
Moslems			
Shī'ī Arabs	–	–	44.9
Sunnī Arabs	14	93.3	28.6
Kurds	1[a]	6.7	12.7
Turkomans	–	–	3.4
Persians	–	–	3.3
Jews	–	–	.3
Christians	–	–	6.4
Sabeans	–	–	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	.1
Total	15	100.0	100.0

Education

	No.
College	11
Secondary	4
Total	15

Class Origin

	No.	%
Classes of low income	6	40.0
Peasants 2		
Policemen 2		
Worker 1		
Vendor 1		
Classes of lower middle income	8	53.3
Petty agricultural entrepreneur 1		
Petty landowners 4		
Official 1		
Member of profession 1		
Tradesman 1		
Classes of middle income	1	6.7
Landed local notable 1		
Total	15	100.0

Sex

	No.
Male	15
Female	–
Total	15

Occupation

		No.
Army officers		5
Marshal	1	
Lieutenant general	1	
Major generals	3	
Civilians		
Party workers		3
Members of professions		5
Schoolteachers	4	
Physician	1	
Municipal clerk		1
Bank clerk		1
Total		15

Age Group in 1969[b]

	No.
No information	1
27 years	1
30-34 years	5
35-39 years	3
40 years	1
44 years	3
55 years	1
Total	15

Place of Birth

	No.
Takrīt	5
Born in Baghdād but originally from Takrīt	1
Sāmarrā' or Sāmarrā' district	3
'Ānah	1
Albū Kamāl	1
Born in Baghdād but originally from Ramādī	1
Born in Baghdād but originally from Sulaimāniyyah	1
Baghdād	1
Mosul	1
Total	15

[a] Arabized Kurd

[b] Approximate

TABLE 58-4

Important Takrītīs in the Second Ba'thī Regime

Name	*Position in government, army, or party*

Army officers	
General Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr	See Table 58-2
Staff Major General Ḥardān ‘Abd-ul-Ghaffār	See Table 58-2
Major General Ḥammād Shehāb	See Table 58-2
Brigadier ‘Umar Muḥammad al-Hazzā’	Commander, First Division 1968; commander, Republican Guard 1968-1970; commander, Baghdād garrison 1970-
Staff Colonel ‘Adnān al-Khairallah aṭ-Ṭulfāḥ[b]	*Mas‘ūl* (Comrade-in-Charge), Baghdād Military Section, Ba‘th party; member, Revolutionary Command Council as of September 1977; and minister of defence as of October 1977
Major General Fāḍel al-‘Assāf	Director general of police 1968-1969
Colonel Ḥusain Hayāwī	Commander of the air force 1969-
Colonel Bassām ‘Aṭiyyah	Commander, Ḥabbāniyyah air base 1969-
Major Ḥamīd at-Takrītī	Commander, Tank Regiment, Republican Guard 1968-
Civilians	
Ṣaddām Ḥusain	See Table 58-2
Murtaḍa al-Ḥadīthī[a]	See Table 58-2
Ṣalāḥ ‘Umar al-‘Alī	See Table 58-2
Khairallah aṭ-Ṭulfāḥ	Governor of Baghdād 1968-
Mahdī ar-Rifā‘ī	Director of security of Baghdād 1968-

[a]This man is of the Ḥadīthīs of Takrīt, who originated from Ḥadīthah.

[b]Brother-in-law of Ṣaddām Ḥusain and son-in-law of Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr. Also son of Khairallah aṭ-Ṭulfāḥ, governor of Baghdād.

From the foregoing observations, it is clear that the Ba‘thī regime reposes ultimately upon a narrow social foundation.

In fact, in view of the distrust or disapproval with which it was initially met by the other political forces, its sense of vulnerability, at least in the beginning, was stronger than that experienced by the regime which it supplanted. This and the desire to cow its enemies or win popularity account for the calculated harshness with which it stamped out “conspiracies” and “espionage rings”: in 1969 a spy chase sent fifty-three Iraqis to the executioner; in January of 1970, twelve civilians and twenty-nine officers and noncommissioned officers were hanged or shot for involvement in an abortive right-wing coup; in July of 1973, thirty-six men, mostly from the public security service, were executed for their part in a plot against the government; and in February of 1977 eight persons were put to death for their role in disturbances at Najaf and Karbalā’, apparently related to the decrease in the flow of the Euphrates river and to alleged curbs on Shī‘ī study circles and religious processions.

The intrigues of the Shah of Iran added to the regime’s sense of insecurity: in the recent past and up to his surprising accord with Ṣaddām Ḥusain in March of 1975 at Algiers, he did all he could not only to feed the rising of the Kurds, but also to prevent their reconciliation with their Arab brethren; in April 1969 his government, in a step quite unprovoked, abruptly declared the 1937 Treaty, which in effect gave Iraq the control of the Shaṭṭ-al-‘Arab border waterway, null and void, and simultaneously massed troops on the frontier and sandbagged buildings in Teheran, ‘Abadān, and elsewhere; in January 1970 it became clear from unimpeachable evidence that the foiled right-wing attempt to topple the Ba‘thīst government had had his active backing; and in November 1971, he seized the Arab islands of Abū Mūsa and the Lesser and Greater Ṭunbs. In this bellicosity against Iraq, as in his conspicuous and extravagant military spending–3.5 billion dollars in 1974 alone–as well as in the role that he craved to play, that of the Gendarme of the Gulf or the Blocker of the Arab Radicals, he was certainly not an independent factor, nor achieving anything of worth for his own people. In this light must also be seen the not-so-secret entente between him and Israel prior to 1975 to keep radical Iraq as weak and as tied down as possible, for as long as possible.

Maneuverings for better position and factional in-fighting within the top military leadership and between the military and civilian wings of the party also contributed to the unease of the regime. The ouster on October 15, 1970, of General Ḥardan ‘Abd-ul-Ghaffār from his posts as deputy commander-in-chief of the armed forces and deputy premier and minister of defence, and his assassination at Kuwait on March 30, 1971; the dismissal from office on September 28, 1971 of Vice-President General Mahdī ‘Ammāsh and of Foreign Minister ‘Abd-ul-Karīm ash-Shaikhlī; the slaying of Defence Minister General Ḥammād Shehāb and the wounding of Interior Minister General Sa‘dūn Ghaidān on June 30, 1973, in a plot by Colonel Nāḍhim Kzār, the chief of internal security; the execution on July 8 of Kzār and on July 9 of Muḥammad Fāḍel, head of the Ba‘th Military Bureau; the sentencing to life imprisonment in the same month of ‘Abd-ul-Khāliq as-Sāmarrā’ī, a left-winger, a party theoretician, and the most popular member of the Ba‘th command[29]–all these things did not, to say the least, serve to dissipate the atmosphere of uncertainty that surrounded the regime.

But its most pressing danger was the restlessness of the Kurds. The agreement of March 11, 1970, with their veteran leader Mulla Muṣṭafa al-Barzānī, providing for their autonomy in the areas in which they form a majority, proved, while it lasted, a shot in the arm of the government. But the salutary effects that it produced were threatened by unhappy incidents, such as the mysterious attempt on Barzānī’s life on 29 September 1971, and completely undone by the breakdown in March of 1974 of the Ba‘th’s relationships with the Mulla and the bursting out of the dispute over the substance of the autonomy and the definition of Kurdish territory–especially with respect to the Kirkūk oil district–into an open and costly conflict. However, the collapse of the Mulla’s rebellion in March of 1975 and the concomitant avoidance of the danger of an out-and-out war with the forces of the Shah by virtue of the Iraq-Iran accord on noninterference and on a median line in the Shaṭṭ-al-‘Arab border, greatly stabilized the regime and enhanced the prestige of its leaders, notwithstanding the recent isolated outbreaks of fighting in Kurdistan now mainly encouraged by Syria.

Not unconscious of their narrow power base and the initial tenuousness of their position, the chiefs of the Ba‘th have all along been taking measures to strengthen themselves within the country.

One of their first concerns has been to transform the army into an arm of the Ba‘th by, so to say, Ba‘thīzing it, not only through studied shake-ups, but also by putting members of their party or, more precisely, “active members,” “member-trainees,” and “partisans first grade,”[30] who hold a secondary school certificate, through a hurried six-month or one-year or two-year course of training at the military college. On graduation, the two-year trainee receives a lieutenant’s commission, and the others appointments as warrant officers. In the army, they are under standing party instructions not to carry out any important order of their superiors without first clearing it with the Ba‘th party center. The same process is taking place in the security services. The attitude of the leaders of the regime toward non-Ba‘thī army and police officers has been free from ambiguity: *“Illī mā yimshī ‘ala sichchitnā yurūḥ yuq‘ud wayā martah*”–“Who does not take our path, stays at home with his wife.”[31] At the risk of being repetitive, and in order to preclude the drawing of an incorrect inference, it should be added that to Ba‘thīze the army does not necessarily involve the affirmation of civilian primacy over it, but rather the primacy of a Ba‘th in which Takrītī loyalties and officer-Ba‘thists are powerful factors.

At the same time, the Ba‘thī leaders have shown initiative in decreasing the distance between them and the mass of the people. Apart from their recognition of the national rights of the Kurds, they passed legislation benefiting the majority of Iraqis. They thus forbade the expulsion of peasants from the land in any circumstances; abolished the right of the landlord under the Agrarian Reform Law to retain the best land; reduced the maximum limit of agricultural holdings to as low as 40 and as high as 2,000 dūnums, depending on the means of irrigation, the kind of crop, and the location and quality of the land;[32] and did away with the principle of compensation for expropriated estates, thus freeing the peasants from redemption payments amounting to about 50 million dīnārs.[33] They also introduced health insurance in the countryside, and launched massive programs for the raising of the cultural level of the rural population, the mechanization of agriculture, the electrification of about 4,200 villages, and the reclamation of no less than four million dūnums. In addition, they created “people’s markets,” enabling the peasants to sell the products of their labor at market prices through appropriate governmental agencies–the Institutions for the Marketing of Fruits and Vegetables and for the

Organization of the Grain Trade and the Dates' Trade–without the interposition of middlemen. Over and above this, they have maintained by state subsidy the price of the popular loaf of bread at 6 fils; lowered the prices of all agricultural machines significantly and of chemical fertilizers by 50 percent; reduced the fees for state technical and advisory services to farmers by 30 to 50 percent; raised the minimum daily wage for unskilled workers in the public sector and the departments of government from 450 to 550 fils in 1973, to 650 fils in 1974, 900 fils in 1976, and 1100 fils in 1977; and extended social security and disability benefits to all industrial, transport, and contractual laborers and laborers in commercial houses–and not simply to laborers in establishments employing ten or more persons, as under an older law.[34] On the other hand, the sluggishness of economic activity in 1972, occasioned by sharp losses in oil revenue, temporarily affected the working classes. Moreover, on account of the depressed condition of agriculture, the restricted flow of the Euphrates river from Syria in 1975-1976, and the necessity, induced by the new agrarian measures, to repeat the whole process of land redistribution and the attendant economic and social displacements, it is doubtful whether the peasants will immediately experience any tangible improvement in their living conditions. But that they and the urban laborers have gained in self-confidence, or that some of them, at least, have come to regard the regime as their champion cannot be disputed. Toward the encouragement of such feelings and the capture for Ba'thism of more and more of the people working with their hands, the party-controlled labor unions and peasants' associations have been primarily oriented.

In their pursuit of popularity, the Ba'thī rulers also adopted a bold line on the question of Palestine and the conflict in the Middle East: in January 1969, they rejected the U.N. Security Council Resolution of November 22, 1967; in July 1970, they denounced the proposal of American Secretary of State William P. Rogers for a ceasefire of at least three months and for peace negotiations through special U.N. envoy Gunnar V. Jarring; in September 1970 they openly pledged to commit their troops in Jordan on the side of the Palestinian Resistance in the event of a showdown with King Ḥusain's army. But the boldness was more in their words than in their deeds: while clamoring against a "political solution," they had not allowed their contingent to do anything on the front other than fire occasional

rounds of artillery and, when the showdown came in Jordan, they ordered their troops not to intervene. In view of the threats of the American government, the diplomatic pressure of the USSR, and Iraq's basic military weakness not only vis-à-vis Israel but also vis-à-vis Iran, it is difficult to see what else they could have done. Their real mistake was in showing more rhetorical boldness than was consistent with their own good. Their failure to live up to their pledge to the Fedayeen not only cost them dearly in prestige, but also produced a serious rift between them and a section of the Ba'th Pan-Arab Command led by Michel 'Aflaq. More than that, it heightened the infighting between the military and civilian wings of the party. The sacking on October 15, 1970, of Ḥardān 'Abd-ul-Ghaffār at-Takrītī, who appears to have had some responsibility for the inaction of the army in Jordan, could in part be viewed in the light of these developments which, however, might have merely provided the occasion for a step decided upon some other ground: the probable apprehensions of both Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr and Ṣaddām Ḥusain at the growing influence of Ḥardān in the army. Another byproduct of the Jordan crisis was a movement of support within the civilian component of the party away from Ṣaddām Ḥusain and toward 'Abd-ul-Khāliq as-Sāmarrā'ī, a member of the Revolutionary Command Council and of the Ba'th Iraqi and Pan-Arab Commands,[35] who, like Michel 'Aflaq, took a forthright attitude in favor of the guerillas. The rise in the stature of 'Abd-ul-Khāliq as-Sāmarrā'ī, to which had added the positive role he played in the realization of the agreement with the Kurds, may have been a factor in his expulsion from the party and his imprisonment for life in July of 1973. Iraq's rulers claimed that he had been connected with the antigovernment plot headed by Colonel Nāḍhim Kzār, but there is a suspicion that they may have merely taken advantage of the plot to get rid of an irreproachable but popular rival.

However, the decline in the prestige of the Ba'thī regime that ensued from its weakness in the Jordan showdown was more than compensated by the popular approval that its oil policy earned. Launching in April of 1972 national production from the North Rumailah oil field with Soviet assistance, the government came in the same month under harassment from the Iraq Petroleum Co., which now slashed the output of crude oil from the Kirkūk fields from 57 million to 30 million tons annually, thus sharply decreasing the country's revenues and seriously affecting its capital

investment budget. To this arbitrary and short-sighted tactic the government, impelled more by financial need than by political inclination, responded by nationalizing the company on June 1, 1972. Its daring action, joined to its success in withstanding a long-drawn-out boycott by Western buyers and in reaching ultimately–in March of 1973–a settlement with the company favorable to Iraq, tangibly increased its stature at home, which, though temporarily affected by the foolhardy plot of Colonel Kzār, was further enhanced by its complete takeover in 1975 of the country's oil industry and, earlier, by its swift commitment of two-thirds of Iraq's armor and three-fourths of its air force in the October War, and its significant help in blocking the advance of Israel's army toward Damascus.

Cognizant, as it was in its early years, of the slightness and uncertainty of its support, the Ba'thī regime appealed from the first for an agreement of all the "progressive" parties within Iraq.

While it did not ignore the rival nationalist forces, it did not show undue concern in winning them over to a common front. They had become too fragmented and too ineffective: no fewer than nine mutually antagonistic pan-Arab organizations were in the field.[36] Even the largest, the Arab Socialist Movement, which comprised Nāṣirites and Ḥarakiyyīn, had just split into two factions, one clinging strictly to the line of the United Arab Republic, and the other opting for Marxism-Leninism and "popular armed struggle." Both factions developed before long the feeling that the regime was playing them off against one another and against the Communists.

For their part, the Communists of the "Central Command" with whom the regime also sought a dialogue, were in no mood for a compromise. They had just fought their first guerilla action against the government: on their own version, in early June of 1968, six weeks or so before the Ba'th's return to power, twelve of their armed men attacked a police post in the 'Ammūqah marshland in the Shaṭrah district of the Nāṣiriyyah province, and seized about fifty pieces of fire-arms but, losing their way in the marshes and at one point thoughtlessly abandoning their boats behind them, were in the end overwhelmed by a superior force from the Fifteenth Mechanized Brigade. On the government side, six died and one helicopter was said to have been downed.[37] While this action was denounced by the Communists of the "Central Committee" as an "individualistic" initiative "removed from the masses and their revolutionary temperament,"[38] the

Communists of the "Central Command" regarded it as the first step on the "long" road toward the realization of the slogan of "the People's Armed Revolution."

Thus disposed, they could not have greatly appreciated the offer of a few seats in the cabinet which the Ba'th held out in August 1968 to the parties of the left. "The mere participation," they declared at that time, "of one or even of several progressive forces in a government dominated by 'the Revolutionary Command Council,' that is, the council of the ruling senior officers, . . . will not change anything in the character of the regime." Instead they demanded the immediate release of political prisoners, the granting of freedom to political parties and autonomy to the Kurds, and the creation of an "interim progressive democratic coalition government." From their standpoint, the important thing was "to bring the working people nearer to their essential aim: a revolutionary popular democratic regime under the leadership of the proletariat."[39]

The Communists of the "Central Committee" whom the Ba'thists wooed the most, put forth identical demands as regard the Kurds and the parties, and called for the election of a constituent assembly which would endow Iraq with a "democratic" organic law and vest legislative power in a parliament chosen by the people.[40]

As an earnest of its goodwill, the Ba'thī regime "pardoned" on 5 September 1968 "all" political prisoners,[41] and on the twelfth of the same month reinstated civil servants dismissed for political reasons.[42] It also permitted Communist exiles to return home. On the other hand, it showed no readiness to meet the key demand for party freedoms or to make any other fundamental concession.

The Communists of the "Central Command" stuck to their stand, and those of the "Central Committee" conveyed to the Ba'thists in mid-October that they were not interested in a purely "formal" participation in the government. "There can be no meaning," they said, "to an alliance with a party that does not recognize the right of our party . . . to engage in open political work and to publish its own newspapers."[43]

November was marked by a wave of violence. On the tenth, former Foreign Affairs Minister Nāṣir al-Ḥānī was stabbed to death in mysterious circumstances.[44] Earlier, on the fifth, two Communists were killed and others wounded when 950 workers, staging a sit-down strike at Baghdād's

vegetable oil factory, came under fire. Two days later, three other Communists died when a rally, celebrating the fifty-first anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, was attacked in as-Sibā‘ Field on the RaṢafah side of the capital.[45] An accusing finger was, in each instance, pointed at the special forces attached to Ṣaddām Ḥusain at-Takrītī's National Security Bureau. Rejoined Ṣaddām regarding al-Ḥānī's case: "Who was Nāṣir al-Ḥānī and what danger did he constitute for the regime and the party? . . . He was neither a politician nor a competitor of ours. . . . Why should we kill him at all?"[46] Insofar as the firing at the vegetable oil factory was concerned, the Ba‘thists pointed out that the Progressive Socialist Workers' Front, which was under their control, had demanded the bringing of the offenders to account. Responsibility for the deaths in as-Sibā' Field was disowned: "The Ba‘th party," said *Ath-Thawrah*, "views the incident . . . as a conspiracy directed at itself before others . . . and having for object the torpedoing of all that it has achieved in the way of preparation for a national front."[47] It is, of course, possible that in this, as in the preceding instance, the different factions within the regime were acting at cross purposes. But provocation from elements hostile to both the Ba‘thists and the Communists could not altogether be excluded.

At any rate, the violence against the Communists so incensed the "Central Command" that it decided to form small armed detachments of its own in Baghdād and elsewhere, and in January 1969, raising the cry for the overthrow of the regime, ordered them into action. In daring deeds, reminiscent of the "expropriations" and "revolutionary holdups" carried out by the Bolsheviks in 1906-1912 with Lenin's approval, the detachments, needing funds badly, raided the offices of the governor of Sulaimāniyyah and a number of business firms in Baghdād, and made off with 19,000 dīnārs. At the same time, they blew up official vehicles and fired upon the house of Ṣaddām Ḥusain and that of Ṣalāḥ ‘Umar al-‘Alī,[48] also a Takrītī and member of the Ba‘th Regional Command and of the Revolutionary Command Council.[49]

Naturally, the government began now searching high and low for ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj, the secretary of the "Central Command," and for his lieutenants, and in February caught up with them. In an-Nihāyah Palace, to which they and scores of their supporters were led off for interrogation, no fewer than twenty were said to have subsequently died under torture, including

Politbureau members Mattī Hindī Hindū and Aḥmad Maḥmūd al-Ḥallāq.[50] But ʻAzīz al-Ḥājj himself broke down,[51] and on 3 April appeared on the television and called upon his followers to renounce violence and cooperate with the Baʻth party.[52]

ʻAzīz al-Ḥājj's defection inflicted a cruel blow upon the revolutionary trend in the Communist movement which had been so intimately tied with his name–a blow from which it did not begin to recover until about a year later, when the "Central Command" group was taken in hand by Ibrahīm al-ʻAllāwī, a Shīʻī architect from the mid-Euphrates.

In the meantime, the Communists of the "Central Committee" had gone on observing a political truce with the Baʻthīsts. Moreover, in the spring of 1969 the two parties began drawing, if warily, somewhat close to each other–a process that was furthered by the government's full diplomatic recognition of the German Democratic Republic on April 30, its sulfur agreement with the Poles on May 1, and its economic-technical cooperation pacts with the East Germans in late May,[53] and with the Soviet Union on July 5.[54] The alliance that ensued, and that was to last roughly till March of 1970, remained informal, limited, and uneasy, and never rested upon a mutually agreed program. However, in this period, Baʻthists and traditional Communists worked hand-in-hand in the Iraqi-Soviet Friendship Association and in the Iraqi Committee for the Solidarity of the Afro-Asian Peoples. They also sent a joint delegation to a 1969 meeting of the World Peace Council, and put up common candidates in the 1970 elections for the Lawyers' Guild.[55] Over and above that, in token of its "openness," the regime permitted the Communists to publish their periodical *Ath-Thaqāfah aj-Jadīdah* ("The New Culture"), and on 31 December 1969, appointed ʻAzīz Sharīf, the ex-secretary general of the Peace Partisans, as minister of justice.

But the Communists were far from satisfied. They deplored the regime's "persisting negative attitude" toward popular freedoms, and the support that "some influential circles in the government and the Baʻth party" continued to lend to "the apparatuses and measures of terror against the patriot forces."[56] More than that, on the morrow of ʻAzīz Sharīf's appointment as minister of justice, they hastened to make plain that ʻAzīz Sharīf was "an independent personality" and that

> the entry of independent personalities into the cabinet is under no circumstance tantamount to the formation of a coalition government or the government of the Unified National Front, which the democratic movement in Iraq is united in regarding as an urgent national need. The representation of all the progressive national parties on the basis of a democratic program and a guarantee of the independence of every party is a fundamental and indispensable condition for any genuine coalition government. . . . The Iraqi Communist party . . . will not share in the responsibility of power unless this condition is met.[57]

After the regime's agreement of March 11, 1970, with Mulla Muṣṭafa al-Barzānī, things took a turn for the worse for the Communists, although the pro-Communist ʻAzīz Sharīf played a helpful role in the negotiations that led to the accord. Officials talked and acted now as if there were only two parties in Iraq, the Baʻth and the Kurdish Democrats. On March 21, Communists that had assembled in al-Maidān Square in Baghdād to take part in the traditional Kurdish Nūrūz–New Year or first day of the spring–procession, were dispersed by force. On the night before, Muḥammad Aḥmad al-Khaḍrī, a member of the Baghdād Communist Committee, was found dead in the street, his body riddled with eighteen bullets. The Baʻth expressed at once its disapprobation, but the Communists maintained that the deed was accompanied by a wide-scale drive against their party. Some hundreds of arrests were said to have been made all over Iraq. This was repeatedly denied by the authorities, and as often reaffirmed by the Communists, who insisted that the arrests had continued and were being carried out by "persons with no known official or legally defined attributes."[58]

On July 1, at a congress of the Kurdish Democrats, ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad, a member of the Communist Politbureau, openly protested against these "oppressive" proceedings, congratulated the Kurds on their central political slogan: "Democracy for Iraq and Autonomy for Kurdistan!" and appealed for a front of the "patriot" forces inspired by the principle of equality.[59] Parts of his speech found an echo in the Kurdish *At-Ta'ākhī*,[60] and the full text was widely circulated in the streets of Baghdād and other towns.

The ruling party took offense at this “Abuse of freedom.” At a press conference on July 20, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr warned the Communists against “playing with fire,” upbraided them with the “ingratitude” they had shown toward the Ba‘th, and threatened to “punish any individual or group violating the public order.”[61]

Earlier, on July 10, the Ba‘thī command had laid its cards on the table, disclosing the real conditions upon which it would accept the Communists in a “national progressive front.” Among other things, it demanded “an objective and candid appraisal” of the Ba‘th “as a revolutionary, unionist, socialist, and democratic party”; an “unambiguous evaluation . . . of the national progressive July 17 Revolution”; a “recognition of the commanding role of the Ba‘th party in the government, the organizations, and the front”; a commitment not to create “special loyalties inside the armed forces other than the loyalty to the revolution”; a willingness to persuade the “international extensions” of the Communist party to ally themselves with the branches of the Ba‘th in other Arab countries; an “absolute rejection of the Zionist state” and “the espousal of armed struggle with a view to the complete liberation of Palestine”; the acceptance of Arab unity “as the foremost and fundamental aim uniting all aims”; and, finally, a belief in the “socialist transformation” of the country.[62]

In their reply, the Communists doubted the “usefulness” of the method of setting terms “before even sitting at the negotiation table.” Far from lifting the barriers to a front, the terms proper were, they felt, “disabling” in their effect. The first stipulation was rather “odd”: would the Ba‘thīsts themselves be willing, they wondered, “to appraise the Communist party in accordance with the texts of its own documents?” Every force is obviously “free to see in itself what it chooses.” In regard to the “July 17 Revolution,” they had already, they said, defined the regime to which it gave birth as a “patriotic” and “anti-reactionary” regime, and had dealt with it on that basis, but would nonetheless continue to “criticize each and every of its steps running counter to the interests of the people.” They regretted that the Ba‘th had seen fit to revive the concept of “the commanding party”: “the question of ‘who leads?’ is a question that should be left to the conscious choice of the masses.”[63] As to the “impermissibility of special loyalties in the army,” this came to the same thing as “the turning of the army into a monopoly of the Ba‘th party and, in a secondary degree, of the Kurdish

Democrats." The next condition, relating to the "international extensions" of the Communist party, was "uncalled for" and "unrealistic" because the Arab Communist parties determined their policies and alliances in the light of the "special conditions" of their own countries. On the pan-Arab question there was at bottom no real difference of view: "nationalist thought" itself had been moving nearer to the more "practical" position of the Communists, who "are genuine upholders of an Arab unity . . . oriented toward the interests of the broadest popular masses." But the formula of "socialist transformation" was inadmissible. For one thing, what the Ba'thists meant by it was "vague and unscientific." For another, the Communists did not believe in "the burning of stages": the country had yet to complete the "national democratic revolution." Besides, the partners of the Ba'th, the Kurdish Democrats, had not inscribed socialism on their banners: did this signify that they would, on that account, be kept out of the front?[64]

With regard to Palestine, the Communists insisted that the condition laid down by the Ba'th only "harmed" the cause that it purported to serve. The Communists could have gone further: they could have pleaded that, on this issue, their attitude and that of the Ba'th were not as sharply divergent in practice as they seemed in theory. Since their Third National Conference of December 1967, they had indeed gone a good way toward reconciling nationalist opinion. They were driven to this by the logic of the situation or, to be specific, by the rise in the influence and popularity of the Fedayeen. If, from the point of view of the established classes, this movement seemed to be shaping up into a dire threat to vested interests, in the minds of a widening circle of people from the poorer ranks, especially in Jordan, it was becoming a symbol of resistance against every oppression. The radical Arab intellectuals saw in it the Revolution in action. They were irresistibly captivated by the impression of vigor and freshness which it produced, and which the older movements–nationalist and Communist–no longer possessed. In short, the Fedayeen counted at the time so much in the popular balance that no political force in the Arab East could afford to ignore them. Hence the striking by the Communists in the fall of 1968 and at every opportunity afterwards of a note that they had not sounded for so very long: the reassertion of "the right of the Palestinian Arab people to return to, and determine their fate in, the land of their fathers."[65] Hence also

the founding on 3 March 1970, in conjunction with the Communists of Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, of the "Partisan Forces"–Quwwāt-ul-Anṣār.[66] There was obviously another motive for these steps: to gain a leverage for the party in the Fedayeen movement. But in this aim the Communists were to be frustrated because they simultaneously remained firmly wedded to a political solution of the conflict, and in due course signified their approval of the "diplomatic mobility" of the Arab countries that accepted the Rogers' Plan.[67] This, to be sure, carried them theoretically further away from the line of the Ba'thists, but in view of the latter's prudence when it came to military action in Jordan, this fresh divergence had little practical value.

At any rate, their Second Party Congress, which assembled in September of 1970 and elected or reelected to the Central Committee, among others, the persons shown in Table 58-5, could nurse but slender hopes for a genuine front with the Ba'thists.

In fact, during the next twelve months the relations between the Communists and the regime worsened: in the winter of 1970-1971 wide-scale arrests of party members took place in the southern provinces;[68] in January it became known that Kāḍhim aj-Jāsim, a peasant-Communist from Ḥillah and a prominent member of the Mid-Euphrates Branch Committee, and 'Azīz Ḥamīd, a professional party worker and a graduate of the School of Economics of Bulgaria's Karl Marx Institute, had died under torture in the Baghdād prison;[69] in May Thābit Ḥabīb al-'Ānī, a member of the Central Committee,[70] was seized in the streets of the capital and carried away by men from the public security service;[71] in August the Communist-sympathizing 'Azīz Sharīf, who had at one point ceased to attend his office, gave up the post of minister of justice and confined himself to the role of a minister without portfolio; in September came news of the death in the torture chamber of the Nihāyah Palace of the Kurdish Branch and Central Committee member Shaikh 'Alī al-Barzanchī.[72]

However, after the middle of the autumn of 1971, partly on account of recurring tension in the Kurdish zone, but mainly under the influence of the anxieties aroused by the saber rattling of the American-backed Shah of Iran, his seizure in November of the Abū Mūsa and Tunb islands, and his unconcealed ambition for hegemony in the Gulf, the regime moved to conciliate the Communists and simultaneously drew closer to the Soviet Union.

TABLE 58-5

Known Leading Figures of the Dominant, Soviet-Recognized Iraqi Communist Party Elected or Reelected to the Central Committee at the Second Party Congress of September 1970 and Still at the Head of the Party in 1973[a]

Name	*Biographical Data*
Members of the Politbureau	
ʻAzīz Muḥammad (first secretary)	See Table 42-6
Zakī Khairī	See Table 14-2
ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd	See Table 31-1
Bāqir Ibrahīm al-Mūsawī	See Table 51-2
Thābet Ḥabīb al-ʻĀnī	See Table 51-2
ʻUmar ʻAlī ash-Shaikh	See Table 51-2
Other members of the Central Committee	
Bahā'-ud-Dīn Nūrī	See Table 29-1
ʻAbd-ul-Amīr ʻAbbās ʻAbd	See Table 56-1
Āra Khajadūr	See Table 51-2
Majīd ʻAbd-ur-Riḍā	See Table 56-1
Jawād Kāḍhim	See Table 56-1
ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq Jamīl aṣ-Ṣāfī (editor-in-chief of Ṭarīq'-ush-Shaʻb)	See Table 56-1
ʻAbd-us-Salām an-Nāṣirī	See Table 22-1
ʻAmer ʻAbdallah'	See Table 31-1
Yūsuf Ḥannā Shīr	See Table 56-1
Mahdī ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Abū Sanā	See Table 56-1
Mukarram at-Tālabānī	See note [b]
Nazīhah ad-Dulaimī	See note [c]
Nūrī ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq Ḥusain[d]	See note [e]
Raḥīm ʻAjīnah	See note [f]
Ṣafā'-ul-Ḥāfiḍh	See note [g]

Mullah Aḥmad Banī Khailānī	See note [h]
Muḥammad Karīm Fatḥullah	See note [i]

[a]The table has been compiled on the basis of available information which may not be up-to-date.

[b]A 48-year-old lawyer, the director general of the Tobacco Authority in 1959, the inspector general of agrarian reform in 1962, the editor of the party magazine *Ath-Thaqāfah aj-Jadīdah* from 1970 to 1972, and Iraq's minister of irrigation since May 1972, Mukarram aṭ-Ṭālabānī descends from a Kurdish family that once furnished the chiefs of the Qādirī mystic order at Kirkūk.

[c]Nazīhah ad-Dulaimī, an Arab Sunnī gynecologist born around 1924 and a founder in 1952 of the League for the Defence of Women's Rights, an auxiliary organization of the Iraqi Communist Party, has been active since the mid-fifties in the Women's International Democratic Federation and from 1959 to 1960 occupied the post of minister for municipal affairs.

[d]Dropped from the Central Committee in 1973.

[e]Nūrī 'Abd-ur-Razzāq Ḥusain, a Sunnī Arab about 39 years of age and the secretary general of the Iraqi Democratic Youth Organization in 1959-1960, was active almost throughout the sixties as a leading member at Prague of the International Union of Students. In 1970 he was slated for a guiding role in the Quwwāt-il-Anṣār or Partisan Forces.

[f]Rahīm 'Ajīnah, an assistant secretary general of the Iraqi Democratic Youth Union in 1959, and a secretary of the World Federation of Democratic Youth in 1962, is nearly 47 years of age and an Arab Shī'ī physician.

[g]An Arab Sunnī lawyer born around 1923, Ṣafa'-ul-Ḥāfiḍh was active in the late fifties and early sixties in the Iraqi Bar Association.

[h]Aḥmad Banī Khailānī, the son of a *mullah* (a man learned in religion), is a Sunnī Kurd from Derbend-i-Khān.

[i]Fatḥullah, a clerical worker, is a Sunnī Kurd from Sulaimāniyyah.

TABLE 58-6

Summary of Table 58-5

Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin	No.
Moslems	
Shī'ī Arabs	8
Sunnī Arabs	5
Sunnī Arab-Kurd	1
Sunnī Kurds	7
Christians	
Armenian	1
Assyrian	1
Total	23

Profession or Former Profession		No.
Members of professions		12
Lawyers	5	
Schoolteachers	2	
Physician	1	
Gynecologist	1	
Engineer	1	
Surveyor	1	
Journalist	1	
Clerical workers		2
Government clerks	2	
Workers		4
Oil worker	1	
Worker-weaver	1	
Worker-mechanic	1	
Worker in tin	1	
Professional party workers		5
Total		23

Education	No.
College	11
Secondary	7
Elementary	2
No particulars	3
Total	23

Sex	No.
Male	22
Female	1
Total	23

Age Group in 1973	No.
No particulars	5
39 years	2[a]
40-44 years	1
45-49 years	9[b]
50-51 years	5[c]
62 years	1
Total	23

[a] 1 approximate age.
[b] 2 approximate age.
[c] 2 approximate age.

For this new phase of Ba'thī policy, the increasing Soviet-Iraqi economic cooperation had smoothed the ground: on April 8, 1971, the USSR had agreed to extend to the Iraq government a loan of 80 million dīnārs at 2.5 percent interest for the financing of a phosphate mine, a chemical fertilizer plant, a pipeline, an oil refinery, and two hydroelectric power stations;[73] and on June 24, a technical accord had provided for Soviet help in developing the North Rumailah oil field toward a yearly output of 18 million tons of crude oil.[74] But now, under the stimulus of the happenings in the Gulf, and after preparatory talks at Baghdād in December of 1971 and at Moscow in

February of 1972, the relations between the two countries were raised to a "higher level." On April 9, President Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr signed with Soviet Premier Alexei N. Kosygin in the Iraqi capital a renewable fifteen-year treaty binding the two sides to "a lasting and unbreakable friendship" (Article 1); to further cooperation toward "the strengthening of [their] defensive capacities" (Article 9); and to "immediate consultations with a view to coordinating their attitudes" in the event of a "threat to the peace of either contracting party" (Article 8). Each government also pledged itself "not to enter any alliance or participate in any bloc . . . or measures directed against the other . . . or to permit the use of its territory for any activity that could hurt the other militarily" (Article 10).[75]

The Iraqi Communist Party ("Central Committee"), which hailed the treaty as a realization of "one of the great aims" for which "the revolutionary movement" had been striving,[76] had, in the meantime, resumed its dialogue with the Ba'thists. A "National Action Charter" announced by Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr on November 15, 1971, had eased the way. Reaffirming standing attitudes on questions of most moment to the Ba'th and holding as a "sacred national duty" the struggle against "the continued attempts of the imperialists and their tool, the Shah of Iran, to erase the Arabism of the Arab Gulf and to seize certain of its parts by force and without right," the Charter appealed for a wide national coalition, and "guaranteed" "all the democratic freedoms to the masses of the people and their patriot and progressive forces, including the freedom of political parties and social, professional, and syndical associations."

To what, at least from the standpoint of intent, appeared as a political concession, the Communists reacted favorably. "In principle," read a special statement published on 27 November in the name of their Politbureau, "our party considers that the proposed draft charter embodies good grounds for national cooperation." At the same time, the statement referred to the need for a "serious discussion" with a view to reducing the "draft" to a text "acceptable to all the sides that have been invited to work together." In particular, it stressed that the instrument should spell out certain basic principles regarding interparty relations, notably one expressing the necessity for the various national parties "to respect one another *as parties that are independent ideologically, politically, and organizationally."* The statement also brought out that it was a matter of "great importance" for the

Communists that the regime should put a *"decisive end"* to *"all forms of oppression"* against them or "against any other national force."[77]

Month followed month but, although the dialogue between the two parties was not broken, and anti-Communist proceedings ceased entirely, no agreement was reached either over the "National Action Charter" or a united front. Nevertheless, on 14 May 1972, the Communists entered the government, Central Committee member Mukarram aṭ-Ṭālabānī receiving the portfolio of Irrigation and his confrère ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah the rank of a minister of state.[78] There had been a strong feeling among the Communists against a mere sharing in the external attributes of authority, but their leadership, perhaps not uninfluenced by advice from Premier Alexei N. Kosygin, thought that this symbolic participation and the presence in the cabinet of the representatives of the Kurdish Democratic party, on the strength of the Kurdish-Baʻth accord of 11 March 1970, would add to the prospects of an authentic front. The Communists also clearly hoped to strengthen the hand of the government in its pending dispute with the oil consortium. At the same time, they "suggested" to the Baʻth command that "adequate powers be granted to the Council of Ministers" and that "a revision in this sense be made in the [provisional] constitution" so that their participation in the government would be "more effective and of greater avail." They also expressed a desire for a daily newspaper so that they could "freely give voice to [their] opinions and attitudes and participate in mobilizing the forces of the people." The Baʻth promised to accede to these requests but "at a later date."[79]

However, for upwards of a year, nothing further was said in this connection, perhaps by reason of the difficult period that the country lived through following the June 1 nationalization of the Iraq Petroleum Company.

Anyhow, it was not until after the coup attempt of Colonel Nādhim Kzār that the participation of the Communists in the affairs of government became–or at least appears to have become–something more than figurative. On July 17, 1973, ten days after the execution of Kzār, their First Secretary ʻAzīz Muḥammad and President Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, in his capacity as secretary general of the Baʻth party, signed at long last the "National Action Charter,"[80] and initiated new efforts to bring the Kurdish Democratic party into the committees of the "Progressive National Front"

which subsequently came to life. One attendant unambiguous concession to the Communists was the announcement that the government had begun to tear down the Nihāyah Palace, Iraq's ill-famed torture prison.[81] Over and above this, their party gained legal standing, and in September official permission was granted for the overt appearance of their underground organ *Ṭarīq-ush-Sha'b*, now a daily of which, incidentally, 6,712,140 copies were printed in 1975 (compared to 18,186,710 for the Ba'thist *Ath-Thawrah)*.[82] In brief, it is clear that the Iraqi Communist party ("Central Committee") finally garnered some fruits from its commitment to a legal and evolutionary political path. However, its alliance with the Ba'th was predicated upon conditions that the Iraq-Iran accord of March 1975 and the ensuing collapse of the Kurdish rebellion have sensibly changed. Whether the governing authority would continue under the new circumstances to place the same value upon this alliance as previously remains to be seen.

CONCLUSION

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CONCLUSION

Perhaps no process has affected, through manifold and intricate mediate causes, the life of Iraqis more enduringly than the gradual tying up of their country in the course of the nineteenth and present centuries to a world market anchored on big industry and their involvement in the web of forces or the consequences of forces unleashed by the Industrial Revolution. To this process is related, in one way or another, a series of large facts: among others, the advance in Iraq of England's power and capital, the turning to Europe's advantage of the system of Capitulations, the appearance of steam-propelled transports, the incipient imitation of modern techniques, the English conquest, the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire and the severance of Iraq's northern Arab provinces from their natural trading regions in Syria, the setting up of a dependent monarchy with a new standing army and a new administrative machine, the exploitation of Iraq's oil resources, and the diffusion of elements of European culture.

The ensuing structural consequences were far-reaching: old local economies, based on the handicraft or boat-building industries and the traditional means of transport (camels and sailing ships), declined or broke asunder; a tribal tillage, essentially self-sufficient and subordinate to pastoralism, gave way to a settled, market-related, tribal agriculture; the communal tribal land and extensive tracts of state domain passed into the hands of ex-warring shaikhs and aghas without ground of right or any payment whatever; tribes, guilds, and mystic orders lost cohesion or disintegrated; vast masses of people moved from the country and provincial towns to the big cities to enroll in the new army, bureaucracy, or police force, or to find employment in the new businesses that supplied the needs of these institutions, or to swell the ranks of unskilled laborers and

noticeably depress their earnings; old ties, loyalties, and concepts were undermined, eroded, or swept away.

In these structural changes and dislocations, all the important political parties and movements, including the Communists, the Free Officers, and the Ba‘th, had their roots. From the same sources flowed the insurrectionary trend that had its most powerful expressions in the 1920 uprising, the military coups of 1936 and 1941, the *Wathbah* of 1948, and the July 1958 Revolution.

To be more explicit, the recurring conflicts during the years of English rule and in the monarchic period reflected an underlying structural discordance. They were also, directly or in an ultimate sense, conflicts between the classes and strata that suffered, and the classes and strata–in Iraq and in England–that benefited from the processes just described.

The moving spirits of the agitation against dominance by the English that culminated in the 1920 armed uprising, sprang from *chalabīs* bound up with the old modes of transport; or from “aristocrat”-officials connected with the former Ottoman administration; or from the *mujtahids* and *‘ulamā’*, the chief exponents of the hereditary social conceptions; or from landed tribal shaikhs or tribal *sādah*, who resented the unaccustomed rigor in English revenue collection or had been badly affected by the English management of the Euphrates waters.[1] The National party, which in the first decade of the monarchy stood for unrelenting opposition to English influence, had its grass roots among handicraftsmen,[2] who, through the inflow of English machine-made goods, were losing their ancestral means of livelihood. The Communists at Baghdād had, from the forties onward, one of their firmest bases of support in the quarter of Bāb-ish-Shaikh,[3] the center of a once thriving manual textile industry. The officer corps and the Ba‘th drew many of their restless elements from the northern Arab families, who had moved to the capital and whose traditional economic life had been disorganized by the hindrances of the new frontiers with Syria or by the decline of such industries as the production of *‘abā’as*– woollen cloaks–at ‘Ānah and of *kalaks–rafts* of inflated skins–at Takrīt.[4] Much of the mass backing of the Communists during their “flood-tide” in 1959 and in their bitter days of February of 1963 came from the Shurūgīs of Baghdād, that is, the tribal peasant migrants from the ‘Amārah country, whose mode of subsistence had been upset by the new agrarian relations and the unrestricted use of

irrigation pumps.[5] Again, no fewer than 32 percent of the entire membership of the Communist Central Committees in the period 1955-1963 were descendants of *sādah* of moderate means and from small provincial towns, whose old economies had been depressed through forces flowing from the subordination of Iraq to the international market.[6] All these facts show unambiguously that the oppositional or revolutionary politics of Iraq have their distinct structural aspects and cannot be properly understood in purely personalized terms.

Other features and relationships emerge from a study of the other side of the structural contrariety.

One feature that sharply stands out was the extreme concentration of wealth, at least in the last two decades of the monarchy. While four-fifths of the families of Iraq were propertyless, 2,480 individuals held in 1958 17.7 million dūnums,[7] and 49 families, who in effect constituted the core of the landlordry, 5.4 million dūnums,[8] that is, respectively, 55.1 percent and 16.8 percent of all privately held agricultural land. Similarly, 23 mercantile, manufacturing, and banking families, 8 of whom were also large landowners, held 30 to 35 million dīnārs in assets of various kinds, or the equivalent of from 56 to 65 percent of the entire private corporate commercial and industrial capital.[9]

The acute unevenness in the possession of property, and the absence of a gentle graduation from the opulent at the apex of society to the unmoneyed mass, account to no little extent for the radical tone of oppositional politics and the endemic instability of the monarchic regime.

But was the existing distribution of wealth reflected in the visible distribution of political power? Or how closely did the one distribution harmonize with the other?

As is evident from Table 9-14 and Table 5-4, 11 of the 23 biggest capitalist families and 41 of the 49 biggest landed families, including the royal house, were, in one way or another or at one point or another, formally linked to the state, providing premiers, or ministers, or senators, or deputies. At the same time, the heads of 28 of these families, the families of landed tribal shaikhs and tribal *sādah*, were, to all intents and purposes, real rulers in their estates or over their tribes.

On the other hand, under the monarchy, no fewer than 44.8 percent of all appointments to the premiership[10] and 41.7 percent of all appointments to

the posts of minister of interior and minister of defence went to ex-Sharīfian officers[11] who stemmed from the middle classes or from humbler origins but, on account of their services to the Hashemites or their access to the means of administration, became, in this period, men of property, though of intermediate proportions.[12] Moreover, in the two decades or so before the 1958 Revolution, decision making on the national scale tended increasingly to be the preserve of one of these ex-officers, Nūrī-as-Sa‘īd, and, in a less effective sense, of Prince ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh.

But neither Nūrī nor ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh was as free as he seemed to be. They both functioned–and so did the other Sharīfians-within a determinate social framework. Hence Nūrī’s “perhaps natural reluctance to offend powerful agricultural and mercantile vested interests,” as British Ambassador Kinahan Cornwallis put it.[13] Hence also the intelligibility of his domestic course of action from the standpoint of their needs and their sentiments: the virtual exemption from taxes of the landed class in his days[14]–to cite just one example–was, it goes without saying, no chance occurrence. More than that, as regards England, both Nūrī and ‘Abd-ul-Ilah had their heart “in the right place,” which brings us to another reason for the lack of a close correspondence between the holding of property and the holding of power: the origin of the political regime in the will of the English and its sustenance by them during part of its life. At play, in other words, was an extraneous force that interfered, when it could and in a manner answering to its purposes, with the natural tendencies or dynamic momentum of the internal structural situation. Over and above this, in the last decade of the monarchy, the outpouring of oil money not only added enormously to the financial strength of the government but, on account of the peculiar nature of the oil industry–its extrinsic relation to the local economy or to the level of native productive power, and its employment of a very small part of the country’s working force–made the government to a great extent economically autonomous from society,[15] and thus increased its possibilities for absolutism–and at the same time distorted further the relationship between private economic power and control or influence over the state machine.

‘Abd-ul-Ilāh and Nūrī had become too unpliant in their opinions or too committed to the established system of appropriation to alter course socially by turning to advantage the growing financial autonomy of the state. They

thus failed to come to grips with the existing structural unbalances, and made the 1958 Revolution unavoidable.[16]

Did the Revolution issue in a qualitatively different form of society? Along what lines is present-day Iraq, that is, the Iraq of 1977, structured?

The unstable character of the regimes that succeeded the monarchy, the fluidity of the social situation, and the paucity or defects of pertinent statistical evidence render generalizations hazardous.

One thing, however, is beyond question: the social power of private large-scale property has been uprooted. This is most obvious in the domain of agriculture. The big landed shaikh and the big landed merchant have been swept away. The pattern of land tenure at the end of 1973 is reflected in the rough figures in Table 59-1. The area owned by Agrarian Reform beneficiaries has since increased considerably. Moreover, at present–in 1977–none of the private landowners hold more than 2,000 dūnums and the vast majority own between 20 and 200 dūnums. On the other hand, as late as 1971, out of a total of 2,110,593 workers on agricultural holdings, 274,377 were still landless and labored for hire. The others possessed their own plots or rented land from the state or the waqf administration, or from private proprietors, or were unpaid members of the households of farm-holders.[17] There has, however, been a marked change in this situation with the recent completion of the land redistribution program.

TABLE 59-1

Pattern of Land Tenure, End of 1973

Agricultural holdings by type of tenure	*Area (in million dūnums)*[a]	*Percentage of total area*
Owned by Agrarian Reform beneficiaries	5.2	22.7
Rented by peasants from the State Organization for Agrarian Reform	7.9	34.5
Owned privately by other than Agrarian Reform beneficiaries	8.0	34.9
Rented from the Waqf Administration	.3	1.4
Operated on a squatter basis	1.1	4.7
Other holdings	.4	.8
Total	22.9	100.0

[a]Based on figures in Iraq's *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1973* (pp. 70, 76, 128, and 130) and on the assumption that there was no change from 1971 to 1973 in the areas of "other holdings" or of squatter and *waqf* land.

At the same time, the government has been reorganizing agricultural production along new lines, as could be gathered from the figures shown in Table 59-2. The growing emphasis on cooperatives–the number of cooperatives rose from 368 in 1966 to 805 in 1970 and 1,363 in 1974[18]– and on collective[19] and state farms stems from the realization that "the frittering of large estates into small or middling plots, though democratic and progressive [from a social standpoint], has had negative effects on the productivity of the individual land unit and the general development of agricultural production."[20] It had also become clear that small-scale peasant farming was scarcely adapted to the use of machinery or modern methods. That agriculture was in a bad shape, at least in the first post-revolutionary decade, emerges plainly enough even from the not so reliable official estimates on the output and yield per dūnum of three of the country's chief food crops shown in Table 59-3. But much of the difficulty also arises from the still unsolved problem of salinization, and from administrative deficiencies and the shortage of agronomists and other agricultural experts.[21] Moreover, in the decade in question, the government's investment policy inclined against agriculture and toward industry.[22] All these things, plus the greater flow of oil money and the disconcerting awareness that the mass of the peasants continue to live upon a slight economic margin, account for the recent launching by the government of the project to reclaim

four million dūnums of land,[23] and for the increase in investment allocations for agriculture from 142 million dīnārs under the Development Plan of 1965-1969 to 365 million dīnārs under the amended 1970-1974 Plan, and to 3.1 billion dīnārs under the Plan of 1975-1980.[24]

TABLE 59-2

Forms of Agricultural Organization

Forms of agricultural organization	*No. of farms or cooperatives in* 1974	1977	*No. of members of farms or cooperatives in 1974 (in thousands)*	*Cultivable area in 1974 (in million dūnums)*
State farms	n.a.	21	n.a.	.39
Collective farms	74	87	10.7	.57
Agricultural cooperatives	1363	2462	203.0	13.20
Privately run and other farms	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	8.77
Total				22.93

Sources: The 1977 figures in the table are from *Events* (London), No. 9 of 28 January 1977 and *An-Nahār* (Beirut) of 29 December 1977. The other figures are based on data in Iraq, Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, *Al-Qiṭā'-uz-Zirā'ī (The* Agricultural Sector) (Baghdād, 1974), pp. 6-7; Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1973*, pp. 70 ff.; and the Socialist Arab Ba'th party, *Thawrat 17 Tammūz. At-Tajribatu wa-l-Āfāq* (The Revolution of July 17. The Experience and the Horizons) (Baghdād, 1974), p. 103.

TABLE 59-3

Iraq's Estimated Output of Wheat, Barley, and Rice in the Pre-Revolutionary Decade 1948/49-1957/58 and the Post-Revolutionary Decade 1958/59-1967/68

		Wheat		*Barley*		*Rice*	
Decade	*Population in 1957 and in 1967 (in millions)*	*Average yearly output (in 1,000 tons)*	*Average yield per dūnum (in kilos)*	*Average yearly output (in 1,000 tons)*	*Average yield per dūnum (in kilos)*	*Average yearly output (in 1,000 tons)*	*Average yield per dūnum (in kilos)*
1948/49-1957/58	6.3	696	148	942	223	148	365
1958/59-1967/68	8.8	845	129	840	187	172	404

Source: Estimates of Ministry of Agriculture. Iraq, *Statistical Handbook . . . for 1957-1967*, p. 27; and *Statistical Abstracts for 1949, 1953, 1956, 1958, 1961, 1963, 1965*, and *1969*, pp. 116-117, 109-111, 87-89, 112-114, 50-52, 89-91, 167-169, and 158-160, respectively.

The cutting down of private landed property to small or moderate proportions has not been the only unambiguous development of the post-revolutionary years. Side by side with this, the government has grown enormously in the life of the people.

For one thing, its impact upon the social structure, or at least its capacity to determine the direction of social change, has been enhanced by its planning powers and its greater influence over the distribution of the national income. Related to this is the increase of its functions on most of the economic fronts. It thus occupies now a monopolistic position in banking and insurance and, as is clear from Table 59-4, dominates large-scale industry. More than that, at least insofar as new investment is concerned, it has, as is evident from Table 59-5, overshadowed private enterprise in agriculture, transport, communications, and wholesale trade.[25]

The role of the government also looms larger and larger in the realm of education, which is now given gratuitously in all of its stages. The number of state college students rose from 8,568 in 1958-1959 to 75,270 in 1975-1976, and of state secondary school students from 73,911 to 499,113. Attendance at state elementary schools grew from 502,306 to 1,765,092 in the same years. But part of the increase is explicable by the abolition of private schools. It is also doubtful whether there has been a commensurate qualitative progress. Moreover, in 1965, 56 percent of the population were still illiterate. However, hundreds of anti-illiteracy centers have since been established and plans drawn up that contemplate the elimination of illiteracy among males by 1985 and among females by 1990.[26]

TABLE 59-4

Industrial Enterprises Employing Ten or More Workers (Excluding the Oil Industry); Government and Private Sectors

	1960[a]		1964 (after Nationalization Laws)		1970	
	Private	Government	Private	Government	Private	Government
Number of enterprises	827	158	935	261	1,081	385
Number of employees	45,861	21,952	38,862	41,986	37,987	67,933
Average number of employees per enterprise	55	138	41	160	35	176
Total revenue (in millions of dīnārs)	62.0	23.0	44.2	82.3	54.2	155.8
Average revenue of every enterprise in millions of dīnārs	.075	.14	.047	.37	.05	.40

[a]In 1954, the total number of private and government enterprises of this size was 727. Their employees counted 44,410; Iraq, *Report on the Industrial Census of Iraq 1954*, p. 21.

Sources: Iraq, *Statistical Handbook . . . for 1957-1967,* pp. 86-89 and 108-109; and *Al-'Irāq rī Arqām* ("Iraq in Figures") (1973), pp. 2-3.

TABLE 59-5

Actual Investments in 1965-1969 and Investment Allocations under the 1970-1974 Plan According to Public and Private Sectors and Economic Activities

	Actual investments in 1965-69 at 1966 constant prices (in million dīnārs)[a]		Planned investments in 1970-74 (in million dīnārs)[a]		
Sector	Public	Private	Central governmental sector	Sector of public enterprises	Private sector[b]
Agriculture	53.9	27.2	336.5	13.0	18.0
Mining	–	2.3	207.3	348.2	50.0
Manufacturing industries	122.3	44.1			
Electricity, water, and gas	49.9	–			
Transport, communications, and storage	66.9	35.4	96.6	86.8	35.0
Wholesale and retail trade	7.8	26.5	–	17.5	15.0
Banking and insurance	2.8	–			
Housing	–	139.1	14.6	9.2	150.0
Construction	–	10.4	–	–	–
Public administration	120.0	–	105.5	20.8	–
Services		29.2			17.0
Other	–	–	192.0[c]	–	–
Total	423.6	314.2	952.5[d]	495.5[d]	285.0[d]

[a]One dīnār exchanged for U.S. $3.37 in 1975.

[b]Includes mixed sector.

[c]Includes expenditure on planning, follow-up and statistical machinery, loans to government departments, and international obligations.

[d]Total includes investments in building and construction by sectors.

Sources: Iraq, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1969*, p. 470; Iraq, *Progress under Planning*, p. 70; and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *Current Economic Position and Prospects of Iraq*, October 9, 1974.

The increased tasks of the government have involved a big build-up in its staff and bureaus. Official and semiofficial employees, excluding those of the Ministry of Defence but including policemen, laborers in the industrial public sector, and teachers in state schools and universities, totaled only about 85,000 in 1958, but 318,868 in 1967,[27] and 456,378 in 1972.[28] The members of the armed forces, for their part, added up in 1973, on a conservative estimate, to 101,800,[29] but were probably nearer to 130,000. When pensioners–in 1973, 73,703 civilians and 51,779 military men were on state pension rolls[30]– and dependents of the soldiery and state servants are also considered, and account is taken of the increase in public employment since 1972, and of the obligation of the departments of government, under a Revolutionary Command Council decree of February 7, 1974,[31] to engage all unemployed university graduates,[32] it becomes clear that, by the end of 1977, something like one-fifth or perhaps one-fourth of the inhabitants of Iraq would be depending directly upon the government for their livelihood and their life chances. In the towns, more than one-third of the employed persons are already employees of the government.[33]

Of course, a big slice of the national income is absorbed by this host of state servants. Their emoluments–exclusive of the salaries of the military and of Defence officials–amounted to 72.6 million dīnārs in 1961 and 111.3 million dīnārs in 1967 or, respectively, 60.9 percent and 54.1 percent of the whole expenditure of the ordinary state budget,[34] and exceeded in both years the total government capital investment.[35] During May of 1972 the total pay of state servants, excluding teachers in state schools and universities and members of the armed forces, came to 14.9 million dīnārs,[36] or a yearly average of 178.8 million dīnārs. Their cost to the state has since shot up sharply by virtue of doubling their allowances under another February 7, 1974, decree.[37]

While many of the employees of the government are productive or perform useful functions and, therefore, add directly or indirectly to the social wealth, others–a good many of them–are superfluous and purely parasitic. This arises to no little degree out of the tendency to allow functionaries to proliferate, not because of any real need, but to reduce unemployment or ward off opposition. Such a thing is not calculated to assure the smoother functioning or easier manipulation of the administrative machine. Much more serious has been the filling of high posts by the Ba‘th

government–and its predecessors–on the basis not of merit or experience but political dependability. This practice appears to be inescapable, at least in the initial phase of any new regime. However, the chief problem of the bureaucracy lies, as has already been indicated, in the still acute general scarcity of technical and scientific skills.

The huge increase in the size of the government, conjoined with the depressed level of agriculture and with other influences previously at work, have led to an accentuated and unhealthy demographic urban growth. Since 1958 the inhabitants of towns have almost tripled (see Table 59-6), and now account for about 63 percent of the total population, as many as 2.6 million being concentrated at Baghdād alone. The problems and tensions generated by such unusually rapid changes have added to the instability of the postrevolutionary regimes, which in turn explains the fumbling and off-handedness of the attempts to cope with the ensuing situation.

Another consequence of the growth of government has been an appreciable rise in the numerical importance of the middle classes.[38] This has been reinforced by the continued widening of educational opportunity. Although the available figures are incomplete or not sufficiently precise, it appears that over the decade ending in 1968 there was a twofold increase of townsmen in the middle and lower middle income brackets, and that their proportion of the urban inhabitants as a whole went up to something like 34 percent from the 28 percent or so at the time of the Revolution (see Table 59-7).

TABLE 59-6

Urban Population of Iraq According to Official Figures

(in millions of persons)

	Total population	*Urban population*	%
1947 (census)	4.8	1.7	35.4
1957 (census)	6.3	2.5	39.7
1965 (census)	8.0	4.1	51.2
1975 (estimate)	11.1	7.0	63.0

Sources: Iraq, *Statistical Handbook . . . for 1957-1967*, pp. 28-29; *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1970*, pp. 45-46; *1973*, pp. 49 and 55; and *Al-ʻIrāq fī Arqām* (“Iraq in Figures”) (1973), p. 1.

Has the numerical expansion of the middle classes been accompanied by an increase in their social and political weight?

It could justifiably be said, though the actual picture is somewhat more complicated, that the regimes that issued from the 1958 Revolution and from the related subsequent coups, including the present regime, have been middle-class regimes, but not in the narrow sense that they have functioned explicitly on behalf of the middle classes or consciously furthered their interests. In what sense, then, could their middle-class character be vindicated? In this connection a number of points stand out.

First, Qāsim, the brothers ʻĀref, and the majority of the members of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers, the Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers, the 1958 Commanders' Council, the various Baʻth Commands, and the Revolutionary Command Councils of 1963 and 1968-1977 belonged to middle or lower middle-income families.[39]

Second, since the Revolution, men of middle condition have not merely occupied the state's nuclei of initiative and decision, but have also had a near monopoly in the upper and middle ranges of its administrative corps.

The real meaning of these facts can be grasped by bearing in mind that, through cutting the roots from under large-scale private property, and by dint of the virtual financial autonomy of the state from society, flowing from its huge oil income,[40] the relationship of individuals or groups to property has receded in importance, and control of the apparatus of government has become the determinant of social action more conclusively than ever before.

TABLE 59-7

Major Categories of the Urban Middle Classes and Their Growth in the First Post-Revolutionary Decade

	No. in 1958	No. in 1968
Professionals, main components		
Government and private elementary and secondary schoolteachers	20,154	56,436
University teachers	600[a]	2,068
Army officers	4,000[a]	10,000[a]
Registered engineers[b]	1,270 (1959)	6,534
Registered lawyers[b]	1,361	1,948
State physicians[b]	1,192	1,574
Others	2,000[a]	3,000[a]
State pensioners and officials, and employees of middling income		
Officials and employees (other than state physicians, teachers, and engineers)	27,000[a]	85,000[a]
Civil and military pensioners	15,000[a]	37,000[a]
Trading, industrial, and service components		
Retailers	36,062 (1956)	76,000[a]
Self-employed industrial enterprisers and owners of small-scale industrial establishments employing one to nine workers	21,733 (1954)	26,690
Owners of small or middling service establishments	10,546[a] (1957)	20,000[a]
Employees of private commercial and industrial firms	7,000[a]	9,000[a]
	147,918	335,250
Dependents (Subtotal × 4)	591,672	1,341,000
Total	739,590	1,676,250
Urban population of Iraq (in millions)	2.6	4.9
Middle classes as percentage of urban population	28%	34%

[a]Estimated or partly estimated.

[b]A small segment of these professionals belonged to the upper classes.

Sources: Iraq, *Abstract of Statistics 1957*, pp. 106 and 120; *1959*, pp. 69-70, 310, 330, and 340; *1961*, p. 371; *1969*, pp. 311-312; 404, 411, 421, 459, and 493; *Report on Industrial Census 1954*, p. 21; and *Al-'Irāq fī Arqām* ("Iraq in Figures"), pp. 3 and 8.

Third, the circumstances that the Revolution and the related coups created have been most propitious to the growth of the middle class. Indeed, its interests permeate the state to a greater degree than the interests of any other element of society. Only rough statistical evidence can be adduced in support of this point. Due to weaknesses arising out of the different methods of calculating Iraq's national income in 1956 and 1969, and to possible tax dodging by businessmen and proprietors and consequent underestimation of their receipts, the figures in Table 59-8 are not as accurate as could be desired, but it is difficult not to interpret them in the sense of a marked shift in income in the towns since 1958 at the expense of big business and big property, and in favor of wage earners and the salaried segment of the middle class. At the same time, it is necessary to keep in view that in 1968 the average yearly pay of the laborers of the State Organization for Industry was only 272 dīnārs,[41] and that these laborers were generally better off than other workmen, the hands in the oil industry excepted. When one, in addition, takes into account that the laborers in all commercial and industrial enterprises liable to the Labor Law added up in

1969 to 225,726 (141,243 unskilled and 84,483 skilled and semiskilled),[42] and that other town laborers came to about 75,000, one cannot avoid the conclusion that in 1969 the total of "salaries" far exceeded the total of "wages," and that the share of the workers was less than 13 percent and that of the "salariat" as high or higher than 25 percent of the national income, excluding agricultural income, 3 percent or so being the portion of the rank and file of the army. It is true that since 1958 the earnings of urban laborers have risen faster than prices, that as from 1964 they have been sharing in the profits of the larger enterprises, and that laborers in the public sector and the departments of government won in 1974 a record daily wage increase of 200 fils and in 1977 a minimum daily wage of 1,100 fils. It is also true that the greater number of the workers are now better fed, better clothed, and better cushioned monetarily against sickness and unemployment.[43] All the same, the middle-class salariat has achieved larger material gains and, with the other social elements of middle condition, has been so far the main beneficiary of the expanding services of the state in education and health, the reduction of the rents of dwellings[44] by up to 32.5 percent under laws passed in 1958, 1963, and 1967,[45] and the free availability of state land for house building, under a 1963 law,[46] to citizens with family responsibilities and limited incomes. The business segment of the middle class has also forged ahead: the small-scale trader has benefited from greater facilities in the matter of collaterals and bank credit,[47] and from the lowering of the rents of shops by as much as 37 percent.[48] That the military middle class has been prospering in a special way may be inferred from the rise of the "salaries and allowances" of the combatant forces by almost six times since the Revolution (see Table 59-9), and from the fact that the spread in income between the lowest paid soldier-volunteer and the highest paid officer is as one to thirteen and between the lowest paid draftee (and the draftees constitute the bulk of the rank and file of the army) and the highest paid officer as one to forty-six, counting the high cost of living, but not the officers' housing, military clothing, and servant allowances, or the additional pay accruing to officers holding positions of command. [49]

TABLE 59-8

Distribution of National Income (Excluding Agriculture) in 1956 and 1969: Estimates in Million Dīnārs at Current Prices

	1956	%		1969	%	
Workers, officials, and employees, and the military						
Salaries and wages	90.1	36.1		259.1	41.0	
Businessmen and proprietors[a]						
Profits[b]	60.3	24.2				
Rent	15.3	6.1	33.0			
Interest	6.6	2.7				
Income from property and from unincorporated enterprises				99.9	15.8	26.2
Savings of business sector				65.5	10.4	
Government						
Government's share of oil profits	68.8	27.6		169.0	26.8	
Direct taxes on business sector	4.4	1.7	30.9	21.3[c]	3.4	32.8
General government income from property and entrepreneurship[d]	4.0[e]	1.6		16.6	2.6	
Total	249.5	100.0		631.4	100.0	
Agricultural income (all factors)	88.1			195.4		
Agricultural income as % of total national income		26.1			23.6	
Total national income	337.6			826.8		

[a]Include, of course, *propertied* officers and officials.

[b]After taxes, and comprising undistributed profits and income of self-employed persons.

[c]Includes taxes on government enterprises.

[d]Includes profits of government enterprises.

[e]Roughly estimated.

Sources: Based on Khayr-ud-Dīn Ḥaslīb, *Taqdīr-ud-Dakhl-il-Qawmī fī-l-ʻIrāq 1953-1961* ("Estimate of the National Income in Iraq 1953-1961") (Baghdād, 1964), pp. 55-56; and Iraq, *Statistical Abstract 1957*, p. 211; and *Weekly Gazette of the Republic of Iraq*, No. 49 of 9 December 1970, p. 129, and Appendix II-1, p. 175.

But could it be maintained on the basis of the preceding observations that the middle classes, as such, have since 1958 been exerting the determining influence in the country?

Obviously the middle classes are not, in an occupational sense, homogeneous, but consist of diverse elements fulfilling disparate functions. But it would not help to exaggerate this point or to draw, at least in the context of Iraq, too rigid a distinction between, on the one hand, the professionals and bureaucrats of the middle class and, on the other hand, the small or middle-scale trader or proprietor, or between the middle-class civilian and military components. To do this would be to overlook the fact

that many of the officials and army officers are themselves propertied. It would also be tantamount to viewing the various middle-class elements in isolation of the living network of social relationships, that is, to losing sight of such things as informal partnerships or connections between bureaucrats and merchants, or the frequent linkages of officials or army officers and tradespeople or proprietors through the family or extended family. These things are more pronounced now than they were prior to 1958, when the dominance in the state apparatus belonged to the Sunnīs, and in trade at Baghdād–and Baṣrah but not at Mosul–to the Shīʻīs.[50] The latter's commercial preponderance is not at present as solid or as plainly evident, but they may have achieved a relatively stronger foothold in the lower and middle reaches of the bureaucracy.

TABLE 59-9

Allocations in the Ordinary Budget for the Ministry of Defence and Actual Defence Expenditure in Selected Years

(in million dīnārs)

	1957/58	*1962/63*	*1966/67*	*1969/70*	*1970/71*[a]	*1972/73*
Ministry's headquarters						
Salaries, allowances, and fees	.13	.19	.20	.19	.18	.15
Administrative expenses	.02	.03	.03	.02	.02	.05
The combatant forces						
Salaries and allowances	9.90	19.30	35.50	42.29	40.00	54.00
Other expenses	11.47	19.11	24.27	62.50	44.50	66.20
Total ordinary budget allocations[b]	21.52	38.63	60.00	105.00	84.70	120.40
Actual defence expenditure	24.14	39.90[c]	68.54	122.12	?	?
Defence share of total ordinary expenditure	32.7%	31.1%	35.6%	42.3%	?	?

[a]The drop in defence allocations for this year may have been a consequence of the signing of the agreement of March 11, 1970 with the Kurdish leader Mulla Muṣṭafa al-Barzānī.

[b]The total excludes state investments and allocations for public organizations and administrations.

[c]Includes 360,200 dīnārs for Palestine Liberation Army Forces.

Sources: Iraq, *Al-Waqāiʻ-ul-ʻIrāqiyyah*, No. 3965 of 30 March 1957, No. 658 of 28 March 1962, No. 1272 of 31 May 1966, No. 1737 of 27 May 1969, No. 1876 of 9 May 1970, and No. 2114 of 28 March 1972; and *Statistical Abstracts* for *1959*, *1963*, *1968*, and *1970*, pp. 300, 171, 347, and 283, respectively.

While it would be a mistake to lay too strong an emphasis on the Sunnī-Shīʻī dichotomy as a factor of division in the ranks of the middle class, it is

still undoubtedly operative, in particular when it coincides with regional divergences or is reinforced by local clannishness.

It is, in fact, more to the survival of loyalties and modes of thought from a past age than to occupational heterogeneity that is to be attributed the weak aptitude of the middle classes for developing common sentiments or joining in common action.

The incohesiveness of the middle social elements, added to the circumstance that the mass of Iraqis are still outside the political cycle–except during brief but historically significant moments–have repeatedly made it possible since 1958 for individuals or groups with a narrow power base to run the show. These have been, for the most part, officers or officers' groups, but it does not necessarily follow that the regimes that they created were purely officers' regimes, or that the officers acted autonomously or that their actions had no class character.

The least easily definable regime is that of General Qāsim, who stood at the head of the country from 1958 until February of 1963. Unlike the bulk of the middle-class army officers, he did not have his origins in the Arab Sunnī northwestern provincial towns, nor shared their susceptibility to pan-Arabism:[51] he was of mixed Sunnī-Shī'ī parentage, his father, a carp enter-worker turned small farmowner, hailing from the southeastern town of aṣ-Ṣuwairah. Therefore–to simplify somewhat an involved situation–Qāsim could not count on much support from the northwestern officers, and did his best to counterpoise against them and against like-minded political parties the forces of the Communists, who had roots in the working class and among the noncommissioned officers and common soldiers. He prevailed by harrying or encouraging the one side and then the other, according to the demands of the moment, leaning in the first place on his own brigade, the Nineteenth, and benefiting from the general sympathy of the Shī'ī poor. At the same time, in his social policies he pursued an unambiguous middle-of-the-road approach.[52]

The regime of 'Abd-us-Salām and 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān, sons of 'Āref, the draper (November 1963-July 1968), drew its strength partly–or for a time–from its links with Nāṣir and Iraq's Nāṣirites, but essentially from the Republican Guard, the balancing of the other military units, and the support of a group of officers from the Arab Sunnī northwestern province of ar-Ramādī (now al-Anbār), the 'Ārefs' home province. The Republican Guard

had been ‘Abd-us-Salām’s Twentieth Brigade, but was transformed into the army’s most effective striking force and strongly infused with men from aj-Jumailah, the ‘Ārefs’ own tribe, to which also belonged their appointees to the key posts of commander of the Baghdād garrison and the assistant director–but actual head–of the military intelligence.[53] In brief, the ‘Ārefite regime pressed into its service tribal, regional, sectarian, professional, and nationalist loyalties. More than that, by eliminating in 1964 big commercial, financial, and industrial property and providing for profit-sharing for laborers and employees,[54] it sought to turn in its favor the class feelings of the most numerous socially conscious elements. But the measure was also partly prompted by the desire to walk in Nāṣir’s footsteps.

The reliance of the present Ba‘thī regime on localistic ties has been even more pronounced, even though no previous Iraqi rulers–excepting Qāsim–have used as effectively modern organizational weapons or mass mobilization techniques. The influence in the army, government, and party of the Takrītī connection–that is, connection with the formerly industrial northwestern Arab Sunnī town of Takrīt–has been strong and unmistakable.[55] This factor had had much less of a role in the Ba‘thī regime of February-November 1963, the party being at the time differently composed–including, as it did, a majority of Shī‘īs in its top command[56] and probably among its “active membership.”[57] The subsequent decline in the significance of the Shī‘īs within the Ba‘th was due to contingent circumstances and the natural workings of localistic relationships, rather than to a calculated party policy.[58] Of course, the present Ba‘thī regime has not relied solely on the strength of the Takrīt clannishness. Apart from its attempt to build the Ba‘th and its auxiliaries into protective shields for the government and into institutions for organizing mass consent and guiding social change, it sought to span bridges with other political forces. Hence its alliance with the Kurdish Democrats in 1970-1971 and with the Communists from 1972 onwards.[59]

If the solidarity of the successive ruling groups, at least since November 1963, expressed itself recurrently-though not exclusively-in regional, localistic, sectarian, or tribal or semitribal forms, it should not be forgotten that these groups and the individuals composing them were predominantly of middle condition and tended, in some respects, to look out into life from similar standpoints and tackle many problems in a similar manner. That

being so, and since they could not make particular but only general laws, they naturally benefited, by their public measures, the classes that existed in situations similar to theirs, that is, the middle classes, even though they were acting on their own account. At the same time, there is no getting round the fact that the most advantaged–at least insofar as the informal functioning of the ruling system is concerned–have been the middle-class families who live in the Arab Sunnī northwestern provincial towns, or who have relatively recently migrated to Baghdād from these towns, that is, the families that have since 1963 provided the principal recruiting ground of the decision makers or the holders of positions of responsibility in the government, the army, the bureaucracy, and the Ba‘th party machine.

From these families a new upper class may be differentiating itself at present. About this, as about the related foregoing points, it is difficult to be more definite, inasmuch as Iraq is in a structural stage that is still in the process of development.

It remains to say a word or two about the prospects of the existing regime. There is little doubt that its leaders are becoming increasingly more versed in the art of political survival. They are also now in closer touch with their people and with reality than at any time since their advent to power. One could even maintain, upon sufficient grounds, that they are more forward-looking than any of their predecessors. But whether their regime will stand out historically hinges, in the long run, upon its ability to contribute, in a creative manner, to the process of nation-state building that the 1920 Revolt had set afoot.[60] This will involve, sooner or later, the necessity of binding the peasants to the townsmen and the Shī‘īs to the Sunnīs; and creating mutually advantageous relations between the Kurds and the Arabs; and, at the same time, raising qualitatively the standard of living and level of culture of the mass of Iraqis–all of which presupposes, before everything else, the ability to channel into agricultural and industrial development the wealth that oil generates instead of largely dissipating it, as in past years, in unproductive consumption. There are already encouraging signs of a determined orientation along these lines. Oil payments have, by their immensity, really solved for Iraq the problem of “primitive accumulation”: the regime does not have to extract out of the people the economic surplus needed to develop the country. At bottom the question is

one of elaborating the institutions and building the skills that could employ the huge oil revenues in a socially effectual way.

These are tasks that are too great for any party acting singly, or simultaneously engaged in combating civil strife, and can be accomplished only if the country's principal political forces pull together and work hand-in-hand for the good of their people.

APPENDIX ONE

EARLIEST BOLSHEVIK ACTIVITIES AND CONTACTS

A. “O MOSLEMS!

LISTEN TO THIS DIVINE CRY!”

The first reference to Bolshevism in the *Abstract of Intelligence*, kept by the British political police in Iraq, occurs in an entry dated January 17, 1920. It was a brief note by the officer concerned to the effect that “Bolshevik talk in Baghdād is on the increase.”[1]

There were Bolshevik revolutionaries in Iraq even before the Bolshevik Revolution. But they had nothing to do with the talk that was now in the air. They came and went with the Russian troops, which at one point penetrated as far as Ba‘qūbah, just fifty-five kilometers from Baghdād, but in June 1917, mutinous and disintegrating, beat a hasty retreat.[2] What aroused the interest of Baghdādīs was a pamphlet entitled *Bolshevism and Islam*, which was then in circulation in the Iraqi capital.[3]

The pamphlet was a crude mixture of discordant pro-Communist, pan-Islamic, pro-Young Turk, and *Salafī*[4] elements, but is of interest insofar as it represents one of the earliest attempts to create sympathy among the Moslem peoples for the Bolshevik Revolution:

> At the opening of the twentieth century of the Christian era, no Moslem country was free from exploitation by the imperialist powers of the West and the autocratic tsars of Russia. In 1908 constitutional government broke forth into life in Turkey burning like a torch in a graveyard. To extinguish it the tyrannical governments of Britain, France, and Russia brought about the World War in 1914. The Ottoman nation under the leadership of the exalted government of Union and Progress displayed during the four years of the war great heroism and a magnificent spirit of self-sacrifice. . . . But the treacherous Sharīf of Mecca intrigued with the British and rebelled against the Caliphate. . . .[5] Not a single Moslem state remains independent today. This is the result of despotism instituted by Mu‘āwiyah 1,300 years ago. . . .[6] O Moslems! There is no cause for despair! Following on the long dark nights of Tsarist autocracy, the

dawn of human freedom has appeared on the Russian horizon, with Lenin as the shining sun giving light and splendor to this day of human happiness. That noble scheme, first visualized by the divine Plato over 2,000 years ago and handed down by way of trust from generation to generation in his *Republic*, has today become a reality thanks to Lenin. The administration of the extensive territories of Russia and Turkestan has been placed in the hands of laborers, cultivators, and soldiers. Distinctions of race, religion, and class have disappeared. Equal rights are given to all classes of the nation. But the enemy of this pure and unique republic is British imperialism, which hopes to keep Asiatic nations in a state of eternal thraldom. It has moved troops into Turkestan with a view to felling the young tree of perfect human liberty just as it is beginning to take root and strength. Time has come for the Moslems of the world and the Asiatic nations to understand the noble principles of Russian Socialism and to embrace them seriously and enthusiastically. They should fathom and realize the cardinal virtues taught by this new system and in the defense of the new freedom they should join Bolshevik troops in repelling the attacks of usurpers and despots the British. They should without loss of time send their children to Russian schools to learn the modern sciences. . .. O Moslems! Listen to this divine cry! Respond to this call of liberty, equality, and brotherhood which brother Lenin and the Soviet government are offering to you:

> "O Moslems of Russia, henceforth your beliefs . . . and institutions . . . are free and inviolable. . . . O Moslems of the East . . . we announce to you that the secret treaties concluded between the deposed Tsar and other states with regard to the occupation of Constantinople . . . have been annulled and torn up. The Soviet government has forbidden the conquest of foreign countries. . . . We also announce that . . . the treaty regarding the division of Ottoman territories has been torn up and destroyed. . . . "[7] O Brethren! Know that you should not recoil from the Russian nation and the present government of Russia. You should rather shun the savage usurpers of Europe who stand ready to conquer territories and enslave peoples. . . . These usurpers who are occupying your homes should be driven out.[8]

The pamphlet was the work of Muḥammad Barkatullah, a prominent Moslem from India, an ex-publisher of *Moslem Unity*, which appeared in Japan between 1909 and 1914, and the foreign minister of the "Provisional Government of India," which was set up in Afghanistan during the First World War with the backing of Ottoman Turkey and Imperial Germany. Of more relevance to this history is Barkatullah's visit to Moscow in 1919[9] and his subsequent association with Jam'iyyat Takhlīṣ-ish-Sharq-il-Islāmī[10]– The Society for the Liberation of the Moslem East.[11]

According to a Moslem Tartar, who was afforded "the possibility of personally studying the methods and activities of the Moscow Bolshevik Musulman organizations," Jam'iyyat Takhlīṣ-ish-Sharq-il-Islāmī was formed in Moscow around the middle of 1919 under the aegis of the Eastern Department of the Narkomindel–the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs–with the object of supporting and encouraging the struggle of the Moslem peoples against European domination. It reportedly came under a Central Executive Committee, seated in Moscow and consisting, among others, of the Moslem leaders Agaev, Akchuraev, Gazhev, and Merzhimekov, who, it was said, worked closely with Leo Karakhan, Arseni Voznesenskii, and Karl Bravin of the Narkomindel. The committee allegedly made its will felt in Asia Minor through an Eastern subcommittee that had its headquarters in Anatolia with the forces of Muṣṭafa Kemāl.[12] On another version, however, the Society for the Liberation of the Moslem East was organized in Mersina, Turkey in 1919, and came to enjoy the patronage of Muṣṭafa Kemāl and the support of the Bolsheviks.[13] Be that as it may, there was scarcely any doubt of the existence of a liaison between Moscow, Kemāl, and patriot Moslems or pan-Islamists.[14]

Signs of the extension of the society to Iraq were noticeable late in 1919 and coincided with the return from Turkey of demobilized Iraqi officers and officials. It spread rather rapidly, making much capital out of the name of Muṣṭafa Kemāl who, until his abolition of the Caliphate in 1924, had "a large number" of sympathizers in Iraq[15] and was, in the words of the oriental secretary of the British high commissioner, "the hero of [its] bazaars and coffee shops."[16] Although the society won adherents in Baghdād, its principal strength in 1920 lay in Najaf, Karbalā', Mosul, Takrīt, and Samāwah. One of the basic themes which it advocated was the

compatibility of Bolshevism and Islam and, therefore, the propriety of collaborating with the Bolsheviks. It also propagandized the idea of a free Iraq allied to Kemāl, and had a share in the gradual working up of public feeling against the English occupiers which culminated in the Iraqi uprising of June-October 1920. The society remained active until about 1922, but from 1920 operated under the title of Aj-Jam‘iyyat-ul-‘Irāqiyyat-ul-‘Arabiyyah–the Arab Iraqi Association.[17]

B. THE BOLSHEVIKS AND THE *‘ULAMĀ’* OF THE HOLY CITIES

In the early twenties the word of the Shī‘ī *mujtahids*[1] of the holy cities was still law among their followers. To the power claimed by them there was apparently no limit. The more cautious, of course, abstained from political matters. But in Shī‘ī principle everything was part of the spiritual realm and, therefore, within the province of the *mujtahids*.

In general, the most politically active were not the great but the lesser *mujtahids*,[2] and particularly those of them who were sons of great *mujtahids*. The descendants of *‘ulamā’*,[3] even if they were not themselves *‘ulamā’*, always retained influence among the people and were respected through their families.

Among the most energetic of the political *‘ulamā’* in the twenties were Sayyid Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr, son of the great Mujtahid Sayyid Ḥasan aṣ-Ṣadr, and Shaikh Muḥammad al-Khāliṣī, son of the great Mujtahid Shaikh Mahdī al-Khāliṣī. Also extremely active was Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā, son of Mirza Muḥammad Taqī ash-Shīrāzī, the chief *mujtahid* of his day.

Sayyid Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr, later a president of the Senate and a prime minister of Iraq, took a leading part in the Iraqi uprising of 1920, the marked feature of which was the reconciliation of Sunnīs and Shī‘īs, diligently preached the *jihād* (holy war) against the British among the tribes, and was an important member of the Iraqi nationalist organization that had its headquarters at the People’s School (al-Madrasah al-Ahliyyah) in Baghdād, and secretly directed the uprising.[4] He also had great influence on his father.[5]

Shaikh Muḥammad al-Khāliṣī was in 1920 “one of the most industrious in the cause of Arab independence,”[6] and was described by the oriental secretary of the high commissioner as “the motive power of which his father, Shaikh Mahdī, is merely the instrument.”[7]

The role of Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā in the independence movement was no less crucial. His father, who became the chief religious authority of the

Shī‘ī sect, and whose 1919 and 1920 *fatwas* (religious decisions) precipitated the uprising, was “guided entirely” by him.[8]

These men-Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā, Shaikh al-Khāliṣī, and Sayyid aṣ-Ṣadr–were, strictly speaking, not “nationalists” but defenders of the old order and the ancient influence of their class against what they conceived to be an encroaching infidel force.

Interestingly enough, they were–if the information in the files of the British political police could be relied upon–the first Iraqis to make connections with the representatives of Bolshevik power. This appears to be clearly established at least in the case of Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā.

Mirza Muḥammad was known to have expressed an interest in Bolshevik ideas as early as March 1920. He discussed openly at that time in Najaf the contents of an Arabic book entitled *Mabādi’ al-Balshafiyyah* (The Principles of Bolshevism), which had for theme the consonance of Bolshevism and Islam.[9] Three months or so later, during the Iraqi uprising, he was proclaimed, according to Gertrude Bell,[10] as head of the Iraqi movement of liberation from the British and as “working for the Bolshevik cause at Karbalā’ ” in an open telegram issued by the Bolsheviks at Resht.[11] This is most probably a reference to his activities in 1920 as president of Aj-Jam‘iyyah al-‘Irāqiyyah al-‘Arabiyyah, which, as already noted, stood for Iraqi collaboration with Muṣṭafa Kemāl and the Bolsheviks. Mirza Muḥammad had been corresponding with the Turkish leader, and had sought to create some coordination between the efforts of the Kemalists and those of the Iraqi independence movement. There is evidence that an aide-de-camp of Kemāl met with him in his house in Karbalā’ on April 17, 1920.[12] An endeavor was made at the meeting to calculate the “reliable” strength in men and money available between Mosul and Baṣrah. Bolshevik ideas and laws were also discussed as to their conformity with Islamic law, apparently with a view to satisfying Moslem opinion that collaboration with the Bolsheviks was warranted. Several important tribal chiefs were present and took an oath “to oppose the British to the death.” Subsequently, ten officers, headed by Lieutenant Colonel As‘ad ad-Dīn Beg were reported to have been sent to Karbalā’ by Muṣṭafa Kemāl.[13] This led in June 1920 to the exile of Mirza Muḥammad to Persia. Undaunted, and embittered by the suppression in October of the Iraqi uprising, he went in Teheran from mosque to mosque, advocating understanding with the Bolsheviks.

Moreover, in March 1921, he was said to have organized, through Sayyid Abu Ṭāleb, his brother-in-law, a society in Kādhimain with a view to winning acceptance for the idea of a Moslem-Bolshevik cooperation.[14]

Two developments helped to further Mirza Muḥammad's purposes. One was the attempt of the English in 1922 to foist a treaty upon Iraq, which aroused fierce opposition, particularly from the side of the *'ulamā'*, and had for an incidental result the joining of Mirza Muḥammad in exile by Sayyid Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr and Shaikh Muḥammad al-Khāliṣī. Then, toward the end of the same year, a new crisis began shaping up between Muṣṭafa Kemāl and the British government, this time over the oil-rich Mosul province. A heavy concentration of Turkish troops on the northern frontier followed.

These happenings were instrumental in bringing about, it would appear, a series of contacts between the Bolsheviks and the Iraqi *'ulamā'* in Persia. As one agent of the government maintained, Sayyid aṣ-Ṣadr wrote to his father from Teheran on 27 December 1922 that he had met two Soviet representatives, discussed with them the Iraqi situation, and given them "the parcel" he had with him.[15] On the following 22 January, according to another report, Shaikh Mahdī al-Khāliṣī received a letter from his son advising him that he, along with others, met with the Soviet minister to Persia who stated that Soviet Russia would help Turkey in case a war broke out over Iraq. The son added that an agreement was reached and that he would send the terms "for the approval of the *'ulamā'* of Najaf."[16] This obviously refers to an agreement that was reported to have been concluded in Teheran in mid-January 1923 between the Soviet Minister, Boris Shumyatskii, a representative of Muṣṭafa Kemāl, and the leaders of an association by the name of Jam'iyyat Bain-an-Nahrain,[17] which had been formed shortly before with the object of "liberating Iraq."[18] Both Shaikh Muḥammad al-Khāliṣī and Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā were, it was stated, prominent members of this association. There is no mention at all in the records of the provisions of the agreement. But it is possible that its object–if it had in fact been reached–was to coordinate the Iraqi national struggle with the movements of Muṣṭafa Kemāl and assure some form of Bolshevik assistance.

But al-Khāliṣī, the father, was seemingly wary of any collaboration with the Bolsheviks, and in a February 1923 letter asked his son to inform the

"Russian Islamic Society"[19] that the '*ulamā*' did not require its assistance.[20] Earlier, when copies of a pro-Bolshevik manifesto, which had been sent to him by his son and which he had passed on to various *mujtahids*, were posted up in the *ṣahn* (courtyard) of the Kāḍh imain Mosque, he was very annoyed and expressed his disapproval of the Bolsheviks. But he did affix his seal in March 1923 to the *fatwa* forbidding participation in any hostile action against the Turks–a move which seems to be in line with the reported agreement.

Thirty-five years after these events, on the night of June 20, 1958, I was sitting beside Shaikh al-Khāliṣī, the son, in his *majlis* (sitting room) in old Kāḍhimain, and he was dictating to me in flowless classical Arabic what he said "really happened" in Persia in the winter of 1922-1923. All the while he punctuated his words with a vigorous movement of an august head bedecked with a huge white turban, and every now and then ponderingly touched his long graying red beard, giving from behind his dark glasses sidelong glances to me and to his followers who throughout the hours of the interview kept trickling in and out of the *majlis*. They would listen for fifteen or twenty minutes, and then kiss the hands of the '*ālim* or make obeisance to him and leave in silence, and so it went till well unto midnight. I had not expected to see visitors. I had given word through his nephew that I should be honored if he could receive me and answer a number of questions concerning "his role in the Iraqi national movement," and he apparently thought that the occasion warranted an audience of his followers. The shaikh talked at length and avidly about his life, that of his father, and their role in the Iraqi uprising, about religion, philosophy, and the "vagaries" of Marx and the Marxists. It was only in the last half hour of the interview that I was able to question him on the real matter which had brought me. He was not prepared for my questions and was somewhat taken aback. While recording the account that he proceeded to give me, I strongly felt that I was being told only part of the story.

"After our exile to Persia and in the latter part of 1922," he said, "we formed a society under the name of The Higher Organization of the Representatives of Iraq in Teheran."[21] The society, he added, acted openly and had its own newspaper, *Liwā' Bain-an-Nahrain*,[22] and came for this reason to be known also as "Jam'iyyat Bain-an-Nahrain" ("The Association of Mesopotamia"). Its purpose was to promote the cause of Iraq's liberation.

Among its members were Sayyid Abū-l-Qāsim al-Kashānī,[23] Mirza Riḍā al-Airawānī–both of whom took an active part in the Iraqi events of 1920–Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā, whom we have already met, the well-known religious leader Sayyid Muḥammad al-Bahbahānī, his brother Mirza ‘Alī al-Bahbahānī, now an Iranian senator, Muṣaddaq as-Salṭanah, then foreign minister of Persia, and Amīr Sulaimān Mirza, who was the leader of the Democratic party of Persia.

> Sulaimān Mirza [continued the shaikh] was in touch with the Russians and used to tell us that the Russians will support the Iraqis if they will rise against the English to reconquer their freedom. There was between him and Lenin an exchange of correspondence and he showed me some of Lenin’s letters. Lenin wrote that the Bolsheviks had no designs on the East, that all they desired was a liberation of the eastern countries from servitude and colonial rule, and that they had no intention of interfering in our internal affairs or opposing the Moslems of Iraq in their religion. I conveyed to my father all that Lenin wrote without making any comments of my own. And what was said of my father was true. He often warned our society against having any contacts with the Russians and he was anxious that it should preserve its independent character. But I never met with the Russians. Their ambassador Shumyatskii many times asked to see me. He had an assistant, a Russian Armenian by the name of Apressov, who time and again sought through Sulaimān Mirza to persuade me to meet with the ambassador, but I firmly refused. . . . It is true that Tass Agency transmitted some of the articles published in our paper, *Liwā’ Bain-an-Nahrain*, but this it did without my knowledge or permission. . . . I am aware that Tawfīq as-Suwaidī wrote a report on me to the Iraqi foreign ministry when he was the charge d’affaires in Teheran alleging that I had connections with the Russian ambassador. But it is all false! There is gratitude for you! I saved the life of this man in 1920. . . . The curse of God on politics!

That Shaikh al-Khāliṣī had foreborne from a complete account is evidenced by the tribute which his father paid to Lenin at that time, and which the Soviet periodical *New Times* published in the fifties:

> The East awakened by you [wrote Shaikh Mahdī al-Khāliṣī] waits for the moment to translate into reality your cherished ideas of alliance of the Eastern nations, of the right of every individual and every nation, big or small, cultured or backward, to life and independence.[24]

After 1923 there was one further recorded attempt to win over the Shī‘ī ‘*ulamā*’ to the cause of cooperation between the Moslem states and Soviet Russia. On 30 October 1926, a society by the name of the “Union of ‘Ulamā’ ” was formed in Teheran on the instructions of Shaikh ‘Abd-ul-Karīm al-Yazdī Qūm, Persia. It had branches in Qūm, Tabrīz, and Khurasān, and was in communication with the ‘*ulamā*’ of Najaf, Karbalā’, and Kāḍhimain.[25] There is evidence that it had also links with Jam‘iyyat Bain-an-Nahrain.[26]

The program of the “Union of ‘Ulamā’ ” which was received in Kāḍhimain on November 7, 1926, from Shaikh Jawād al-Jawāhirī and was read at the house of the ‘ālim Sayyid Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr on November 13, 1926, called for the establishment of a more intimate link between the *‘ulamā’* of Persia and Iraq; the formation of religious societies which would be charged with the welfare of Islam in general, and which would work in Persia and Iraq for the improvement of relations with Turkey and Soviet Russia; and, lastly, the control of these societies by the *mujtahids* in their capacity as religious leaders of the people.[27]

There is reason to believe that the Bolsheviks inspired the idea of the “Union of ‘Ulamā’.” Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman, the leader of the National party, who made enquiries concerning the union, stated at a private meeting on November 20, 1926, that he had come to know that the idea was suggested “by the Soviet through certain Persian politicians.”[28] It is significant in this respect that G. S. Agabekov, who was in 1928-1929 the head of the Eastern Section of the Foreign Department of Soviet Russia’s OGPU,[29] wrote in 1930 after his defection from the service of his country that “the work at Qūm”–where, as we have seen, the initiative for the formation of the “Union of ‘Ulamā’ ” originated–was “of vital interest” to Moscow because “the priesthood of Qūm had connections with the priesthood of the holy cities of Najaf and Karbalā’ in Iraq,” and that the representative of Khlopkom[30] in that city had, “thanks to his perfect knowledge of Persian,

and his wide business relations penetrated deeply into the life of the local priesthood."[31]

C. THE BOLSHEVIKS, THE COMINTERN, AND THE ARAB NATIONALISTS

The first contacts between the Bolsheviks and the Arab nationalists appear to have taken place as early as 1923. We cannot, however, be altogether sure of this, as the information on hand is of a scrappy and indefinite nature. Involved was a semiclandestine Arab society that appeared in Syria, Iraq, Palestine, and the Ḥijāz in the wake of the dismemberment of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire at the end of the First World War. The society, which grew out of a congress that was held in Mecca in 1921, came to be known as Ḥizb-uj-Jazīrah (The Party of the Peninsula).[1] It centered at one time round Ḥusain of the Hashemites, then king of the Ḥijāz. Its aims, as defined by its general manifesto, were the independence and unity of the Arab peninsula,[2] the unification of all Arab political societies, noncooperation with "the foreigners who wish evil to the Arabs," and the replacement of foreign by national manufactures.[3]

It seems probable that in the course of pursuing its aims, Ḥizb-uj-Jazīrah, not perhaps unaffected by the example set by the Kemalists of Turkey, entered into communication with the Bolsheviks. One of its leading members in Iraq, Shaikh Salmān al-Quṭaifī, affirmed in 1924 that the party had established a "branch" in Russia.[4] That there existed some contact, or at least a desire to establish contact with the Bolsheviks, may be gathered from the following code which fell into the hands of the British political police in January 1924:

Code of Ḥizb-uj-Jazīrah

For	*Code words*	
we have been able to unite the word of the parties	shūfīna	– we are cured
Sultan of Najd	aj-jār	– our neighbor
King Faiṣal	al-akh	– our brother
King Ḥusain	ash-sharīk	– our partner
Prince ʻAbdullah	aṣ-ṣihr	– our son-in-law
the Turks	al-bāyiʻ	– the seller
the Bolsheviks	az-zāriʻ	– the cultivator
the British	al-khāl	– our (maternal) uncle
the Public	az-zubūn	– the client
revolution	as-sūq	– the bazaar

If we are somewhat vague in regard to the earliest Bolshevik-nationalist contacts, we know, on the other hand, definitely when the Communist International first interested itself in Arab national problems. For this we are indebted to a report delivered by the leader of the Palestine Communist party, Haim Auerbach (alias “Abu Siam” alias “Danieli,” alias “Pinhas”) at a secret meeting of the party in Tel Aviv on March 8, 1927.[5]

According to Auerbach, Arab problems were brought up “for the first time” before the Communist International for discussion “from all points of view” in December 1926. Although the discussion tended, in fact, to revolve upon Syria and affected Iraq only in an indirect manner, we may perhaps be allowed to describe the proceedings at some length, as they enable us to catch a glimpse of the inner workings of the Comintern on a matter relating to the Arab East.

What gave occasion to the Comintern discussion was the Syrian Revolt of 1925-1926. The revolt was the work of two unkindred forces: the notables of the Jabal Druze, who had fear for their old feudal privileges, and the Damascene nationalists, who were concerned generally with the independence and unity of the Arab peoples and more immediately with the freedom and integrity of Syria. In the course of the revolt, the French army twice bombarded Damascus. Parts of the city were laid in ruins, and tragic losses were inflicted on its population. These sad events reverberated from one end of the Arab world to the other and aroused the interest of the Communist Party of Palestine, then the only active Communist organization in the Arab East, but by the time it was able to bring up the matter before the Communist International–and the International in those years generally neglected the party–the revolt was almost over.

When Haim Auerbach arrived in Moscow on 14 December 1926 to report on the situation[6] and seek the guidance of the Executive Committee of the Communist International (E.C.C.I.),[7] the Seventh Plenum[8] of the Committee, which was then in session, was about to conclude its activities and Auerbach could only present a few observations, and had after-wards some difficulty in commanding the attention of the Comintern leaders. “I regret,” reported Auerbach later to his Palestine Central Committee,

> that during my presence in Moscow the members of the Executive Committee could not meet together as they were very busy in the discussions which were unexpectedly raised on the question of the opposition in the Russian party. What increased my difficulties was the fact that the leaders of the Comintern were busy in affairs relating to the Plenum, after the conclusion of the sittings of which they became occupied with the reorganization of all Comintern committees. Nevertheless with the assistance of Comrade Bukharin[9] I was able to submit the questions affecting us at the first sitting of the Executive of the International.

Actually, at that sitting Auerbach spoke very briefly on the most important aspects of the problems relating to the Arab national movement and to the Palestine party, and suggested the establishment of a special branch committee. Ossip Pianitskii, of the Russian party, opposed the suggestion on the grounds that such committees only retarded the work, and thought that if the Presidium[10] itself would take interest in these questions things would run more smoothly. It was finally decided on the recommendation of Chemiral, leader of the Czechoslavakian party, that the Secretariat on Oriental Affairs should look into the matter at the soonest possible time. The secretariat was then engrossed in the Chinese problem, and Auerbach had long to wait for his turn.

But when at last the secretariat was able to free itself from other work, it devoted ample attention to Arab issues. Jacques Doriot and Nardi of the French Communist party were, apart from Auerbach, the most active participants in the discussions that centered chiefly on the Syrian Revolt. Doriot was of the opinion that the revolt was a local movement, in the success or extension of which there was no great hope. Nardi, who seems to

have had an exaggerated notion of Communist capabilities, ventured the suggestion that the Communists should endeavor to create a general Arab revolution or, if that was not possible, to liquidate the Syrian revolt. Auerbach maintained that the revolt had become the focus of the Arab nationalist movement, and that its effect had passed beyond the boundaries of Syria and pervaded all neighboring Arab countries. It was, he continued, the only revolutionary phenomenon in Syria, and during its two years had a greater effect on "the organizations of the people" than had all the preceding years of peace. "We have, therefore," he concluded, "to aid the Syrian revolution with all our might and if there is no hope of complete success, partial success could undoubtedly be achieved" For this it was not enough that help "should be extended only by the contiguous Arab countries. All workmen of Europe should contribute their share of aid."

After a protracted debate, the Secretariat on Oriental Affairs adopted the following decision:

> The Syrian revolution is not a local one and its great positive effect cannot be denied. As to the hope for its success, we are of the opinion that it is not in the course of progress but is rather in decline. It is not possible for us to aid the Syrian revolution by any action that we might perform there, and whereas the Chinese movement requires the greatest assistance that can be given by the laboring class in Europe, and whereas the latter cannot possibly assist both the Syrians and the Chinese at one and the same time, and whereas the abilities of this class are limited, however important the Syrian revolution, therefore it is the duty of the Communist parties in France and Syria[11] to assist with all their might the Syrian revolution.

All the Comintern branches, and especially the French and Palestine parties, were requested to study the Arab question "from all sides" and submit their observations to the Comintern to enable it "to take the necessary action." The Palestine party was also directed to further its work in the Arab nationalist movement in Palestine and Syria by (a) widening and strengthening Communist ties with this movement, (b) creating in its midst associations "to be formed by the people's class," (c) issuing an

“extreme” nationalist newspaper which will combine Communist and nationalist agitation, and (d) aiding by all possible means the Syrian revolutionaries. The Communist parties of England and France agreed to provide assistance in “money and men” to facilitate the tasks of the Palestinian Communists.[12]

At a subsequent conference in which representatives of the English, French, and Palestinian parties took part, it was also decided to establish two committees to deal with Arab affairs, one in the Comintern and the other in the Communist Youth International.[13]

But the Comintern stood very little chance of creating ties with the Arab national movement through the Palestine Communist party, as the latter suffered from a serious handicap: the almost complete absence of Arabs from its midst. Jewish Communists had, since the founding of the party, tried hard to overcome Arab distrust. They made known in no uncertain terms that they, like the Arabs, opposed Zionism. But their efforts went unappreciated.

Greater opportunities were offered for the Comintern with the gathering at Brussels in February 1927 of the first congress of The League Against Imperialism and Colonial Oppression and For National Independence.

The League[14] was formed in Berlin toward the end of 1925 with the object of linking together the efforts of the peoples of the colonies and coordinating them with endeavors of “left” tendency in the noncolonial world. It attracted no lesser figures than Jawaharlal Nehru of the All-India National Congress, Madame Sun Yat-sen, then of the Chinese Kuo Min Tang, Muḥammad Ḥaṭṭah of the Indonesian nationalist movement, and Muḥammad Ḥāfiḍh Ramaḍān of the Nationalist party of Egypt. It also won the support of Professor Albert Einstein of Germany, Bertrand Russell of England, and the novelist Henri Barbusse of France.

“This is an altogether new departure”; said Nehru on the eve of the League’s Brussels Congress,[15]

> hitherto there have been no links between the Indian movements and those of Indo-China, China, and the Moslem countries. There existed only some connection based on religious unity between the Moslems of India and those of Arabia and North Africa but it was not solid nor did it manifest itself in any combined action.

Actually, the idea was not entirely novel. The short-lived Council of the Peoples of the East for Action and Propaganda, which was created by the Baku Congress of September 1920, had aimed at banding together the peoples of the colonies,[16] but the council was undisguisedly tied to the executive committee of the Communist International, and its appeal was largely to "the peoples" and "the toiling masses" of the East, and was not calculated to attract the nationalist or middle-class elements who were the real backbone of the colonial movements, and who either out of prejudice or conviction did not wish to associate themselves openly with the Communists. It was, apparently, to make up for this error that the League Against Imperialism now took the field.

According to Scotland Yard,[17] the League was an offspring of the Workers' International Relief (W.I.R.) and the parent of the W.I.R. was the Comintern. Both organizations, which had their headquarters in Berlin, existed, Scotland Yard affirmed, solely to carry on revolutionary activities. The chairman of the League was F. Danziger and its secretary, Louis Gibarti. The latter was also the secretary of the W.I.R. The League established itself in Berlin, Brussels, Paris, London, Amsterdam, and elsewhere.

The climax of its activities was its Brussels International Congress of February 10 to 14, 1927, which was attended by 175 delegates and 134 organizations representing 37 countries in Asia, Africa, Europe, and America.[18] Of the Arab lands, only Egypt, Palestine, and Syria were represented. Iraqis, having been denied exit permits, were not present.[19]

One of the many steps taken by the congress was the creation of a League "Secretariat for the Arab countries" Through this body the Comintern hoped to forge the link with the Arab national movement that the Palestine Communist party had in vain sought to achieve. The post of secretary was filled by Maḍhar al-Bakrī, of the Bakrī landowning clan, and a member of the Syrian National Committee. He was entrusted with the mission of organizing regional committees in Iraq, Syria, Palestine, and Transjordan, and uniting them in a pan-Arab central committee under the title of "The League for the Liberation of the Arab Countries."[20] Eventually this organization was to be linked up with analogous committees in Egypt and al-Maghreb.[21]

But al-Bakrī was unsuited for the role for which he was now cast. When he came to Iraq he found little favor with the nationalists. To begin with, in Baṣrah he associated exclusively with the well-to-do landowning class, which in that city was "frankly pro-British."[22] And then, during his stay in Baghdād, he publicly vented his envy of the degree of independence enjoyed by Iraqis, and suggested that the constraints to which they were subject were nothing in comparison with what the Syrians had to endure under the French. At one point he was even taken for a British propagandist. With such meek views, he obviously could not make much headway in Iraq and his mission eventually came to naught.

In the meantime, preparations that were made to convoke a pan-Arab congress in Cairo under the auspices of the League Against Imperialism and the Nationalist Party of Egypt were thwarted by the British. The organizers of the congress went one better and planned on Mecca at the time of the pilgrimage, but they were again counterchecked. The congress–or rather the shadow of one–finally met in Frankfurt in July 1929. There was considerable advance billing for the event. Printed and mimeographed posters and circulars and telegraphic invitations were received in all the Arab countries in both the East and the Maghreb. One letter, addressed to the newspapers and intercepted by the Iraqi police, described the projected "Congress of the Arab League" as the "first serious step" to infuse life into the Arab idea. A printed notice reminded the Arabs that their disjoined and solitary endeavors for liberty was the cause of all their misfortunes, and that the time had come to coordinate their struggle against their enleagued imperialistic enemies.[23]

But the response was not proportionate to the effort expended. Only a few Arabs showed up at the Congress. By way of explanation, Ibrahīm Ibrahīm Yusuf, of the Arab Secretariat of the League, a member of the left wing of the Egyptian National party, and a trainee of the Communist University of the Toilers of the East,[24] affirmed that the colonial powers had fought the idea of the congress at every turn and that thirty-six accredited delegates from the Arab countries had been refused exit visas.[25] But there were also other reasons. The National party of Iraq, for example, declined the invitation "owing to lack of time." But its leader, Abū-t-Timman, subsequently explained that the real reason was the lack of funds and that he personally was against attending, as he knew so little of the League.[26]

The activities of the League Against Imperialism just described make it very clear that the Communists in the latter part of the twenties sought not only to create ties with the nationalists of the Arab lands, but also to influence them strongly in a pan-Arab direction. It is note-worthy that at about this time–in 1929, to be exact–George Agabekov of the Eastern Department of the O.G.P.U. received instructions to proceed to Syria with the express purpose, among others, of investigating the chances of a union between its people and Arabs of other countries. “The Soviet government” he wrote in the following year, “dreams of a united and independent Arab state that could be pitted against England and France in the East.”[27] This pan-Arab preoccupation of the Soviets was, as noted elsewhere, to influence the character of incipient Arab communism.

The League Against Imperialism has historical significance from one other respect more narrowly pertinent to our inquiry, and this is that it was partly under its influence that was formed in 1935 the first all-Iraqi Communist organization: Jam‘iyyat Ḍudd-il-Isti‘mār–The Association Against Imperialism–which the Iraqi Communists regard as the founding nucleus of the Communist Party of Iraq.[28]

D. AN OVERTURE IN TEHERAN

In August 1928, through the offices of the Soviet consulate at Kermanshah, an Iraqi, who had merely given out that he was the secretary of the minister of public works of Iraq, met with Zaslavskii, the first secretary of the Soviet embassy in Teheran. According to a shorthand record of their conversation, the Iraqi secretary informed the Soviet official that there existed in Iraq a national revolutionary party which had the wide support of the Iraqi intelligentsia, and had struck deep roots among the townsmen and the tribes. Several Iraqi ministers, he added, were members of the party, and King Faiṣal himself was aware of its existence and sympathized with it. The aim of the party was to win complete independence for Iraq, and for this it was necessary to turn the British out of the country. To the Soviet government the party now turned for moral support, being convinced that the Soviets must naturally sympathize with all liberation movements. The Iraqi secretary then asked permission to send a few dozen young men, members of the party, to the USSR for the study of military affairs, and requested the assurance of the embassy that, in case of necessity, the party would be permitted to purchase arms from the Soviet government, which it would need for the purpose of an uprising in Iraq.

Particulars of this meeting first came to light in the memoirs of Agabekov,[1] ex-head of the Eastern Section of the OGPU. Normally memoirs of this nature would have to be taken with a grain of salt, but in this case, and insofar as they touch upon Iraq, the memoirs seem to be remarkably accurate, and dovetail, as we shall see, into the accounts recorded in the British Intelligence files.

To resume Agabekov's narrative, the counsellor of the Soviet embassy, Loganovskii, hastened to report to Moscow on the Iraqi overture. He called attention to the fact that the representative of the Iraqi party did not ask for any material aid, and stated that he personally was left with the impression that the party was of serious purpose. Indicating that the Iraqi was awaiting an answer, Loganovskii begged for instructions. In Moscow the matter was carefully weighed. It was observed, however, that though the Iraqi secretary

spoke of influential men in the party, he did not give any names. In view of this reticence and in fear of provocation, it was decided as a preliminary measure to obtain further information as to the program, influence, and composition of the party. This task was entrusted, always according to Agabekov, to the Soviet Consul at Kermanshah and the OGPU resident in Persia. The information requested had not been received up to the time when Agabekov left Moscow, that is, up to October 1929.

Enquiries subsequently instituted by the British revealed that the Iraqi minister of public works[2] had two secretaries in 1928, and that both were out of Iraq in the month of August. The records showed, however, that one of the secretaries, Zion Zilkha, had gone to Palestine and Egypt, but had apparently not been to Persia. "It was not likely" commented J. F. Wilkins,[3] "that those who are predominantly Muslims would entrust anything to a timid Jewish clerk."[4] The other secretary, Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd-ul-Ḥusain, passed over the frontier to Persia on 19 July and returned to Baghdād on 26 August 1928,[5] and was in all probability the man to whom the memoirs of Agabekov referred.

In confirmation of this view, J. F. Wilkins could have cited an article contributed by Sayyid Muḥammad to *Al-ʻIraq* on 18 February 1929[6] entitled "The Anglo-Russian Rivalry and Its Influence on the Awakening of the Peoples of the East." In the article, Sayyid Muḥammad affirmed that "Soviet Russia is now pursuing a policy that favors the peoples of the East. No other state has done this before. . . . Everywhere Soviet Russia stands on the side of the Eastern peoples and supports them morally and materially." . . . "The East," he went on, "is on the move and determined to destroy the old and decayed order of life and to strike out new and progressive paths. . . . But the imperialist powers of Europe stand in its way and retard its advance. That's why the East has turned toward Moscow. . . . If the policy of imperialism continues unchanged, this orientation will persist, and the weak nations will end by committing themselves into the laps of Soviet policy." His conclusion was, however, on a different note. "Inasmuch as political circumstances," he said, "have created a powerful rival for European imperialism, the East will inevitably realize its aspirations. . . . The Soviet-Western rivalry cannot but redound to the advantage of the Eastern peoples."[7] The article, which appears to have had a collective authorship though it bore the name of Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd-ul-

Ḥusain, sheds some light on what was perhaps one of the purposes behind the approach to the Soviet authorities. The renowned ‘ālim Sayyid Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr, who had a hand in the writing of the article, made the point all too clear when on the morrow of its appearance, that is, on 19 February 1929, he enlarged on it and said that “the publication of such pro-Russian articles were calculated to induce the British to soften their policy toward Iraqis.”[8] What we are suggesting is the possibility that the British were meant to know of Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain’s activities in Persia.

It is time now to turn to the question of the identity of the party on behalf of which Sayyid Muḥammad made his overture to the Soviet embassy. The British, while also suspecting the involvement of the People’s party,[9] appear to have been more inclined to the view that the National party[10] was the “national revolutionary party” of Agabekov’s memoirs. The People’s party was little more than an aggregate of personal interests, and was led by Yāsīn al-Hāshimī and Rashīd ‘Ālī al-Gailānī. The National party, though smaller than the People’s party and not always as effective, was, thanks largely to the dedication and incorruptibility of its founder, Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman, altogether unique among the Iraqi parties of the time in that it was moved by idealist passions rather than by the impulse of private advantage.

The view that the National party was the “national-revolutionary party” in question finds its support in the considerations that follow:[11]

1. Immediately after his return from his mission in Persia, Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain called upon Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman. At the time, however, he was said[12] to have delivered to Abū-t-Timman a letter from Shaikh al-Khāliṣī who, as noted elsewhere, was in exile in Persia.

2. On 22 October 1928, ‘Umar al-Ḥajj ‘Alwān, a prominent member of the National party, left for Persia, ostensibly with the object of fetching his Persian wife but, according to a report dated 25 October, he was actually carrying letters from Abū-t-Timman to Shaikh al-Khāliṣī and to the Russian consul at Kermanshah.[13] The latter, it will be remembered, was the official mentioned in Agabekov’s memoirs in connection with the Soviet government’s directive for further enquiries. The repeated references to al-Khāliṣī suggest that Jam‘iyyat Bain-an-Nahrain and its *‘ulamā’* were also involved.

3. On 26 November, ‘Umar al-Ḥājj ‘Alwān returned from Persia, and it was again reported that he brought letters from the Soviet consul in Kermanshah to Abū-t-Timman.[14]

4. On 3 April 1929, the British Special Branch Officer of Baṣrah, who had been on an assignment in the Persian city of Ahwāz, wrote that he learned that the Russian consul there was “particularly active” in regard to Iraq. The consul was said to have been in touch with Abū-t-Timman through the medium of persons who pretended to consult with a Russian doctor who lived behind the cbnsulate, and between whose house and the consulate there was internal communication.[15]

5. Finally, a report by date of 14 May 1929 speaks of a meeting between the ‘ālim Sayyid Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr and Abū-t-Timman, at which aṣ-Ṣadr showed the nationalist leader a letter from the Russian consul at Teheran regarding one Ḥājjī Ya‘qūb Khanov, a skinmerchant, who was coming to Iraq on behalf of the consul. Both, it was stated, agreed to assist Khānov.[16]

The evidence so far seems to point strongly to Abū-t-Timman. The reports on his connection with the Soviet consuls were persistent and from different sources. However, Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain, the intermediary in the initial contact, was in June 1924, with Yasīn al-Hāshimī, among the “prime movers” for the formation of the People’s party.[17] Although sometime thereafter he parted company with al-Hāshimī, in 1928 he was again in league with him. Moreover, al-Hāshimī was reported on 14 July 1928, that is, five days before Sayyid Muḥammad left Iraq, to have deputed him to proceed on a political mission to Persia.[18] A subsequent report added that he had entrusted him with letters to Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā ash-Shirāzī, Sayyid Abū-l-Ḥasan al-Kashānī, Sulaimān Mirza, and Shaikh al-Khāliṣī[19]–which brings Jam‘iyyat Bain-an-Nahrain again into the picture.

It is, of course, possible that in addition to Jam‘iyyat Bain-an-Nahrain, both the People’s party and the National party had a hand in the affair. The two parties, it should be pointed out, were in this period openly drawing close to each other–a development that was to culminate in their formation of a united front and their signature of the “Covenant of Brotherhood” on the night of 22-23 November 1930, with the object of overthrowing the 1930 Anglo-Iraqi Treaty.[20]

There remains one very intriguing feature: Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain was not only in league with al-Hāshimī, but was also connected with the royal palace through his uncle Sayyid Bākir Wāḥid al-‘Ain, deputy lord chamberlain at the court–a connection which in the twenties was generally taken for granted. Should we, in view of this factor, give added significance to the emissary’s statement to the secretary of the Soviet embassy, Zaslavskii, that King Faiṣal knew of the existence of the Iraqi “national-revolutionary party” and sympathized with it? In other words, did the king have any knowledge of Sayyid Muḥammad’s mission? All that can be said is that in the years 1927-1929 there was a critical deadlock in the relations between the Iraqi monarchy and the British government. A serious trial of strength took place between King Faiṣal and the high commissioner, Sir Henry Dobbs. The bone of contention was the control of the Iraqi army. The king insisted on complete Iraqi responsibility for the defense of the country. He also desired to substitute for voluntary military service a system of conscription. The English would not yield on either demand. At no other period in his reign did the king feel more politically helpless or more disillusioned with English policies.[21] On 27 November 1928, he vented his despondency in pungent terms to the Indian Moslem leader, Muḥammad ‘Ālī. To the latter’s complaint of the difficulties he had met in being admitted to Iraq, the king replied that he had no knowledge of it, that he had no real authority, and that the real power was elsewhere, and then added that none of the promises made to him and to his father had been carried out by the British. His father was a prisoner in Cyprus, his brother, King ‘Ālī, had no place to live, while he was not free in his own kingdom.[22]

APPENDIX TWO

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLES

TABLE A-l

Members of the First Party Conference of the Communist Party, March 1944

Name	*Party body represented*	*Biographical data*
Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf (Fahd), secretary	Central Committee	Table 14-2
Zakī Basīm	Central Committee	Table 19-1
Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī	Central Committee	Table 19-1
Aḥmad ʻAbbās, known as ʻAbd-Tamr	Central Committee	Table 19-2
Sharīf Mulla ʻUthmān	Kurdish branch of the party	Table 19-3
Krikor Badrossian	Armenian branch of the party	Table 19-3
Stephan Strak	Armenian branch of the party	Note 1 below
ʻAlī Shukur	Baghdād party organization	Note 2 below
Ḥusain Ṭaha	Baghdād party organization	Table 16-1
ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq	Baghdād party organization	Table 19-3
Ḥaskail Ṣiddīq	Baghdād party organization	Table 19-3
Sāmī Nādir	Baṣrah party organization	Table 14-2
Ḍhāfer Ṣāliḥ ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq	Baṣrah party organization	Note 3 below
Mālik Saif	ʻAmārah party organization	Table 19-3
Mūsa Muḥammad Nūr	ʻAmārah party organization	Table 19-3
Ḥamīd Majīd	Nāṣiriyyah party organization	Note 4 below
Dāūd Salmān Yūsuf	Nāṣiriyyah party organization	Table 19-3
Murtaḍa Farajallah	Najaf party organization	Note 5 below

[1]*Stephan Strak:* Armenian; Christian; born 1922 Baghdād; employee of Iraqi Petroleum Co. at Hadīthah; secondary education; lower middle class; joined party 1943.

[2]*ʻAlī Shukur:* Arab; Moslem Sunnī; born 1910 Baghdād; driver of a locomotive; elementary education; working class; joined party 1941.

[3]*Ḍhāfer Ṣāliḥ ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq:* Arab; Moslem Sunnī; born 1908 Baṣrah; elementary schoolteacher, secondary education, lower middle class; joined party 1932.

[4]*Ḥamīd Majīd:* Arab; Moslem Shīʻī; born 1913 Nāṣiriyyah; seller of fish; elementary education; working class; joined party 1932.

[5]*Murtaḍa Farajallah:* Arab; Moslem Shīʻī; born 1912 Najaf; elementary schoolteacher; secondary education, lower middle class; joined party 1943.

TABLE A-2

Members of the First Congress of the Communist Party, March 1945

Name	Party position held on eve of congress	Biographical data
Yūsūf Salmān Yūsuf (Fahd)	Secretary general	Table 14-2
Zakī Basīm	Member of the Central Committee	Table 19-1
Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī	Member of the Central Committee and secretary of the Southern Party Zone[a]	Table 19-1
Aḥmad ʻAbbās, known as ʻAbd-Tamr	Member of the Central Committee	Table 19-2
Sharīf Mulla ʻUthmān	Secretary of the Kurdish branch	Table 19-3
Krikor Badrossian	Secretary of the Armenian branch	Table 19-3
Arām Boghos Kadoyān	Member of the Armenian branch committee	Note 1 below
Sāmī Nādir	*Mas'ūl*[b] of the Baṣrah local committee	Table 14-2
Ḍhāfer Ṣāliḥ ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq	Member of the Baṣrah local committee	Table A-1
Ismāʻīl Aḥmad	Member of the Baṣrah local committee	Table 19-3
Mālik Saif	*Mas'ūl* of the ʻAmārah local committee	Table 19-3
Mūsa Muḥammad Nūr	Member of the ʻAmārah local committee	Table 19-3
Fiʻl Ḍamad	Member of the ʻAmārah local committee and of the party's peasants' committee	Note 2 below
ʻAlī Muḥammad ash-Shabībī	*Mas'ūl* of the Najaf local committee	Table 19-3
Murtaḍa Farajallah	Member of the Najaf local committee	Table A-1
Dāūd Salmān Yūsuf	*Mas'ūl* of the Nāṣiriyyah local committee	Table 19-3
Ḥamīd Majīd	Member of the Nāṣiriyyah local committee	Table A-1
Rashīd Ḥusain	Member of the Nāṣiriyyah local committee and of the party's military committee	Note 3 below
ʻAbd-ul-Azīz ʻAbd-ul-Hādī	Member of the party's military committee and of the Baghdād local committee	Note 4 below
ʻAlī Shukur	Member of the party's labor committee and of the Baghdād local committee; leader of Railway Workers' Union	Table A-1
ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq	Member of the Baghdād local committee and *mas'ūl* of the northern and southern *qiṭāʻs*[c] of Baghdād	Table 19-3
Yahūda Ṣiddīq	Member of the Baghdād local committee and of the students' committee attached to the Baghdād local committee	Table 19-3
Muḥammad ʻAlī Zarqā	Member of the Baghdād local committee and of the students' committee attached to the Baghdād local committee	Table 19-3
Ḥusain Ṭaha	Member of the Baghdād local committee	Table 16-1
Ḥasqail Ṣiddīq	*Mas'ūl* of Law School students in Baghdād	Table 19-3
George Murqos	*Munaḍḥḍhim*[d] of railway workers' committee, Baghdād	Note 5 below
Mikhaīl Butrus	*Munaḍḥḍhim*[d] of railway workers, Baghdād	Note 6 below

[a]This zone embraced party organizations in the provinces of ʻAmārah, Baṣrah, and Muntafiq.

[b]*Mas'ul* - comrade-in-charge.

[c]*Qitaʻ* = party administrative sector.

[d]*Munaḍḥḍhim* = organizer.

[1]*Kadoyān:* Armenian; Christian; born 1924 Baghdād; clerk with a private firm; secondary education; lower middle class; joined party 1943.

[2]*Fiʻl Ḍamad:* Arab; Moslem Shīʻī; born ʻAmārah date unknown; ex-*sirkāl* (man in charge of cultivation in a shaikh's estate), dispossessed of his land by the Shaikh of Albū Muḥammad; no education; peasant class; joined party in 1943.

[3]*Rashīd Ḥusain:* Kurd; warrant officer; joined party in 1943; other particulars not known.

[4] *'Abd-ul-Hādī*. Arab, Moslem Sunnī; born 1917 al-'Adhamiyyah, Baghdād; law student and ex-second lieutenant in army; graduate of Military College; lower middle class, joined party 1941.

[5] *Murqos*: Arab of Chaldean origin; Christian; born 1920 Baghdād; railway employee; secondary education; lower middle class; joined party 1943.

[6] *Butrus:* Arab of Chaldean origin; Christian; born 1920 Baghdād; employee of the Ministry of Supplies; secondary education; lower middle class; joined party 1943.

TABLE A-3

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization) Party Position of All Members Known[a] and Analyzed in Tables A-4 to A-33

Higher echelons (1941-1949)	
Members of Fahd's Central Committees (November 1941-October 1948)[b]	
Members of Politbureau	6
Other full members of the Central Committee	13
Candidate members of the Central Committee	9
Members of the provisional and "unauthorized" Central Committees (October 1948-June 1949)[c]	12
Middle echelons (1943[d]-June 1949)[e]	
Provinces	
Mas'ūls[f] of local party committees	49[g]
Other members of local party committees[h]	126
Greater Baghdād	
Members of Baghdād local party committees[i]	50
Leading Communist members of the auxiliary organizations of the party[j]	
members of the Party of National Liberation	4
members of the League Against Zionism	6
head of the Committee of the Students' Union[k]	1
Leading members of the Armenian branch committee[l]	5
Communists not tied to any particular organization but fulfilling special	8

functions under the guidance of the Central Committee	
Correspondents, links, or carriers (murāsils) of the Central Committee with the Syrian Communist Party	3
Tudeh of Iran	3
Communist Party of Great Britain	1
Communist Party prison organization	2[m]
local Communist organizations	4[m]
Lower echelons and rank and file (1947-June 1949)[n]	
Lower echelons and "active" rank and file[o]	756
Other rank and file–civilian party organization – on whom only incomplete information is available[o]	512
Members of the military organization of the party on whom only incomplete information is available[p]	262
Total	1,832

[a]For explanation see text pp. 643-644.

[b]See Tables 19-1, 19-2, 19-3, and 22-1.

[c]For "unauthorized" committees see Table 23-1.

[d]No stable and formalized structure of echelons existed prior to 1943.

[e]Bear in mind the observation in the text (p. 644) on the "inner upward mobility" of party membership and the point that no party member was taken into account more than once in this analysis; e.g., a Communist who was a member of a local party committee at one point during the period 1943-June 1949 and became the *mas'ūl* (see note f below) of that committee before the end of the period is analyzed under the *"mas'ūls."*

[f]*Mas'ūl* or *ar-Rafīq al-Mas'ūl:* comrade-in-charge.

[g]The discrepancy with the total number of *mas'ūls* shown in Table 27-2 is due to the fact that three Communists held each two successive appointments at different centers.

[h]Comprise: the *mas'ūls* of *qiṭā's* (urban party districts), of workers, students, peasants, and soldiers and members-in-reserve.

[i]Comprise: the *mas'ūls* of *qiṭā's* (urban districts), of workers, students, women, and of the military.

[j]Other than those who were simultaneously members of the Central Committee.

[k]This party position was activated only briefly in the months following the *Wathbath*

[l]Although a Kurdish party branch existed in Fahd's time it had only a secretary, who was at the same time a member of the Central Committee.

[m]In many instances the carriers of the Central Committee were reliable and well-trained children. This class of carriers has not been included under "middle echelons."

[n]I.e., the lower echelons and rank and file that came to light in the years mentioned.

[o]In the police files there were names and particulars of 1,268 civilian-Communists who belonged neither to the "high echelons" nor to the "middle echelons" of the party as defined in this table. Only 756 of them, however, were regarded by the police sufficiently "active" or "dangerous" to merit an

investigation. Thus no complete information is available in regard to the remaining 512. Moreover, it has been possible to determine the party rank of only 223 of the 756 “active” Communists. As many of the others no doubt also held lower ranks – most probably the rank of cell *Munaḍḥḍhim* (organizer) – it was thought better to analyze the characteristics of all 756 together. The lower_ party ranks included the *mas‘ūls* of *manṭaqas* (urban subdistricts), the *mas‘ūls* of villages (other than the ones who were simultaneously members of the local party committees), the *Munaḍḥḍhims* of *salafs* (collections of dwellings in rural areas), the *Munaḍḥḍhims* and members of the primary workers’ and students’ committees; the *Munaḍḥḍhims* of territorial cells and of workers’, students’, women, and soldiers’ cells, and the party *murāsils* (carriers: see note m above).

[p]See Table A-33. No information other than on the military rank and unit of these soldier-Communists is available.

TABLE A-4

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd’s Organization); Occupation of All Known Members[a]

Students			505	(27.6%)
College				
Higher Teachers' Training	55			
School of Law	54			
School of Engineering	27			
School of Commerce	18			
School of Medicine	11			
School of Pharmacy	5			
Queen 'Āliya's College[b]	3			
School of Arts and Sciences	2			
School of Theology	2			
American University of Beirut	3			
Michigan University	1			
Exchange students	2			
Total college	183	(9.9%)		
Secondary schools[c]	298	(16.2%)		
Trade schools	24			
Members of professions			178	(9.7%)
Teachers				
College	1[d]			
Secondary school	45[e]			
Elementary school	83[f]			
Total teachers	129	(7.2%)		
Others				
Lawyers	22	(1.2%)		
Journalists	6			
Engineers	5			
Photographers	3			
Pharmacists	2			
Musician	1			
Physician	1			
Dentist	1			
Painter	1			
Mulla[g]	1			
Petitions' Writers	6			
Total others	49			
White collar			167	(9.1%)
Middle and lower grade government officials				
Railways	29			
Baṣrah port	8			
Posts and Telegraphs	3			

Electric supply	2		
Telephones	1		
Customs	3		
Agriculture and Irrigation	9		
Health	7		
Justice	5		
Education	4		
Tobacco monopoly	5		
Finance	6		
Interior	1		
Other ministries or departments	13		
Total government	96		
Middle and lower grade civic officials	18		
Middle and lower grade clerks in private firms			
Oil companies	13		
Banks	7		
Transport and travel companies	4		
Other firms	29		
Total private	53		
Trading, industrial and landlording petty bourgeoisie		122	(6.7%)
Small property owners	11		
Small shopkeepers	53	(2.9%)	
Small contractor	1		
Total	65		
Craftsmen			
Tailors	21		
Weavers	3		
Carpenters	16		
Shoemakers	4		
Goldsmiths	9		
Ironsmiths	2		
Watch repairers	2		
Total	57	(3.1%)	
Peasants		47	(2.6%)
Peasants	45		
Sirkāl[h]	1		
Peasant-landowner	1		
Workers and semiproletarians		471	(25.7%)
Workers (unspecified)	78		
Industrial and transport workers			
Railway workers			
Unspecified	40		

Schalchiyyah railway workshops[i]			
Unspecified	22		
Fitters	33		
Carpenters	20		
Electrical workers	14		
Mechanics	12		
Blacksmiths	7		
Turners	3		
Smelters	2		
Total railway workers	153		
Port workers[j]	11		
Oil workers	17		
Other industrial workers			
Shoe-manufacturing	64		
Printing	27		
Cigarettes	27		
Construction	19		
Textile	12		
Brickmaking	5		
Mechanics	4		
Electricians	3		
Tailoring	2		
Blacksmithing	1		
Tin-working	1		
Tanneries	1		
Car repairing	1		
Truck or bus drivers	5		
Total industrial and transport workers	353		
Semiproletarians			
Menial workers[k]	28		
Tea or coffee-servants	6		
Street vendors	6		
Total semiproletarians	40		
Members of armed forces		285	(15.6%)
Commissioned officers			
Staff captains	2		
Lieutenants[l]	4		
Total	6		
Noncommissioned officers			
Warrant officers	17		
Sergeants	10		
Sergeant-Majors	2		
Corporals	14		
Lance-Corporals	21		
Total	64		

Soldier-craftsmen	26	
Privates	127	
Military students	62	
Members of police forces	1[m]	(.05%)
Unemployed	30[n]	(1.6%)
No particulars	26	(1.4%)
Grand total	1,832	(100.0%)

[a]For explanation see text pp. 643-644.

[b]A women's college.

[c]Includes intermediate and preparatory schools and elementary teachers' schools.

[d]Assistant professor at the School of Engineering.

[e]Includes preparatory and intermediate schoolteachers, and one teacher-novelist.

[f]Includes one teacher-journalist.

[g]A man of religion.

[h]Man directly in charge of cultivation in a shaikhly estate.

[i]For Schalchiyyah workshops, see pp. 617 and 619-620.

[j]For the actual total number of port workers in 1948 see Table 27-3.

[k]Includes menial government employees.

[l]Includes two ex-lieutenants.

[m]A police commissioner.

[n]Includes Fahd himself, who was an ex-blacksmith, ex-mechanic, etc., 6 females, and 13 boys between the ages of 14 and 19.

TABLE A-5

Occupation of the Members of Fahd's Central Committees and of the Unauthorized Committees (1941-1949)[a]

	Fahd's Central Committees	"Unauthorized" Central Committees	Fahd's Committees		"Unauthorized" Committees	
	No. of members	No. of members	Total	%	Total	%
Students			4	14.3	5	41.7
College						
School of Law	3[b]	–				
School of Engineering	1	1				
School of Pharmacy	–	1				
School of Commerce	–	1				
Secondary School	–	2				
Members of professions			14	50.0	4	33.4
Teachers						
College	–	1[c]				
Secondary school	5[d]	1				
Elementary school	5[e]	1				
	10 (35.7%)	3				
Others						
Lawyers	2	–				
Journalist	1	–				
Musician	1	–				
Petitions writer	–	1				
White collar workers			3	10.7	1	8.3
Lower grade government clerks	2[f]	–				
Lower grade clerk at Basrah Oil Co.	–	1				
Clerk at a private garage	1	–				
Members of armed forces			–	–	1	8.3
Ex-second lieutenant	–	1				
Craftsmen			1	3.6	–	–
Weaver	1	–				
Workers and semiproletarians			5	17.8	1	8.3
Textile worker	1	–				
Worker in a tannery	1	–				
Shoe factory worker	1	–				
Electrician	1	–				
Mechanic	–	1				
Coffee-servant	1	–				
Unemployed			1[g]	3.6	–	–
Total			28	100.0	12	100.0

[a]Occupation at time of first appointment to Central Committee.

[b]Including 1 female.

[c]Assistant Professor at the School of Engineering.

[d]Includes 1 teacher-novelist.

[e]Includes 1 teacher-journalist.

[f]At the port: 1; in the Irrigation Department: 1.

[g]Fahd who was an ex-blacksmith, ex-mechanic, etc. (See Table 14-2).

TABLE A-6

Occupation of the Middle Echelons of the Communist Party (1943-June 1949)

	Provinces				Greater Baghdād		All organizations	
	Mas'ūls of local party committees		Other members of committees					
	No. of mas'ūls	%	No. of members	%	No. of members	%	Total no. of members	%
Students	12[a]	24.5	36[b]	28.6	20[c]	23.0	68	25.9
Members of the professions	20[d]	40.8	33[e]	26.2	24[f]	27.6	77	29.4
White collar workers	7[g]	14.3	27[h]	21.4	21[i]	24.1	55	21.0
Trading and industrial petty bourgeoisie	2[j]	4.1	10[k]	7.9	6[l]	6.9	18	6.9
Peasants	–	–	2[m]	1.6	–	–	2	.8
Workers and semiproletarians	3[n]	6.1	14[o]	11.1	6[p]	6.9	23	8.8
Members of armed forces	2[q]	4.1	1[r]	.8	5[s]	5.8	8	3.0
Unemployed	1	2.0	–	–	3[t]	3.4	4	1.5
No particulars	2	4.1	3	2.4	2	2.3	7	2.7
Total	49	100.0	126	100.0	87	100.0	262	100.0

[a]Secondary school students: 8; college graduates: 4.

[b]Secondary school students: 31; college graduates: 5.

[c]Secondary school students: 2; college students: 18.

[d]Teachers: 14 (28.6%); lawyers: 4; others: 2.

[e]Teachers: 24 (19.2%); lawyers: 3; others: 6.

[f]Teachers: 11(12.6%); lawyers: 7; others: 6.

[g]All middle and lower grade government officials.

[h]Middle and lower grade a) government officials: 13; b) civic officials: 5; c) clerks in private firms: 9.

[i]Middle and lower grade a) government officials: 11; b) clerks in private firms: 10.

[j]Both small shopkeepers.

[k]Shopkeepers: 2; craftsmen: 7; small contractor: 1.

[l]Shopkeepers: 3; craftsmen: 2; small property owner: 1.

[m]*Sirkāl* (peasant agent of shaikh in charge of cultivation): 1; peasant landowner: 1.

[n]Electrical worker: 1; tin worker: 1; shoe factory worker: 1.

[o]industrial workers: 7; workers at port: 1; menial workers 4; newspaper sheet vendor: 1; taxi driver: 1.

[p]Indus trial workers: 4; menial workers: 2.

[q]Warrant officer: 1; corporal: 1.

[r]Second lieutenant.

[s]Staff captains: 2; lieutenant: 1; ex-lieutenant: 1; warrant officer: 1.

[t]Including 2 females.

TABLE A-7

Occupation of the Lower Echelons and the "Active" Rank and File of the Communist Party (1947-1949)

	Total	%
Students	279[a]	36.9
Members of professions	83[b]	11.0
White collar	108[c]	14.3
Trading, industrial, and landlording petty bourgeoisie	103[d]	13.6
Peasants	4[e]	.5
Workers and semiproletarians	120[f]	15.9
Members of armed forces	14[g]	1.9
Members of police forces	1[h]	.1
Unemployed	25[i]	3.3
No particulars	19	2.5
Total	756	100.0

[a]College students: 98 (13.0%); secondary school students: 181 (23.9%).

[b]Teachers: 67 (8.9%); lawyers: 6 (.8%); others: 10 (1.3%).

[c]Middle and lower grade government and civic officials: 76 (10.1%); middle and lower grade clerks in private firms: 32 (4.2%).

[d]Craftsmen: 47 (6.2%); small shopkeepers: 46 (6.1 %); small property owners: 10 (1.3%).

[e]Place of activity of 4 peasants: districts of Kāḍhimiyyah, Baghdād, Ḥillah and a village near Ḥalabjah.

[f]Industrial workers: 86 (11.4%); menial workers: 34 (4.5%).

[g]Noncommissioned officers: 5; privates: 9.

[h]A police commissioner.

[i]Includes 4 females as well as 13 boys between the ages of 14 and 19.

TABLE A-8

Occupation of the Other Rank and File of the Civilian Organization of the Communist Party (1947-June 1949)[a]

	Total	%
Students	149[b]	29.1
Peasants	41[c]	8.0
Workers	322[d]	62.9
Total	512	100.0

[a]No detailed information was collected by the police on this category of the rank and file. The only data available are contained in the table and notes on this page.

[b]College students: 53 (teachers' training: 29; engineering: 10; commerce: 10; law: 4); secondary school students: 72; trade school students: 24. All students were from Baghdād except for 2 who lived in Baʻqūbah and al-Khāliṣ in the province of Diyālah.

[c]All the peasants lived in Diyālah, 32 being from Buhruz and 9 from al-Khāliṣ.

[d]All were industrial workers except for 65 who were simply listed as "workers." The others include: railway workers: 49; shoe workers: 56; fitters: 32; cigarette workers: 26; printing workers: 26; carpentry workers: 19; construction workers: 15; electrical workers: 11; blacksmith workers: 7; oil workers: 6; brick workers: 5; turners: 3; smelters: 2. Information regarding place of origin or place of activity of workers not available, except for oil workers, who worked in Kirkūk and K3.

TABLE A-9

Ratio of Known College Student-Communists to Total Number of Students in the Colleges of Iraq in 1948-1949

College	Total no. of students in 1948-1949[a]	No. of known student Communists (largely in years 1947-1949)[b]	Second column as % of first
Higher Teachers' Training	578	55	9.5
School of Law	2,545	54	2.1
School of Engineering	240	27	11.3
School of Commerce	452	18	4.0
School of Medicine	331	11	3.3
School of Pharmacy	120	5	4.2
Queen 'Āliya's College	288	3	1.0
School of Theology	19	2	10.5
Police Training College	92	–	–
Total in all colleges	4,665	175	3.8

[a]Government of Iraq, Ministry of Education, *Annual Report on the Progress of Education, 1955-1956* (in Arabic), pp. 69 and 75.

[b]See Table A-4. I have omitted from this column the six students who were associated with universities abroad and the two students who attended the School of Arts and Sciences, which was founded early in 1949.

TABLE A-10

Ratio of Known Teacher-Communists to Total Number of Schoolteachers

	[1] Total no. of teachers in state schools, 1948-1949	[2] Total no. of teachers in private and state schools, 1948-1949	[3] No. of known school-teacher-Communists	[3] as % of [1]	[3] as % of [2]
Secondary schools[a]	789[b]	1,385[c]	45[d]	5.7	3.2
Elementary schools	5,733[e]	6,512[f]	83[g]	1.4	1.3

[a]Includes intermediate and preparatory schools.

[b]Iraq, *Annual Report on the Progress of Education, 1955-1956,* p. 54.

[c]*Ibid*., pp. 54 and 95.

[d]See Table A-4.

[e]Iraq, *Annual Report on the Progress of Education, 1955-1956,* p. 43.

[f]*Ibid*., pp. 43 and 89.

[g]See Table A-4.

TABLE A-11

Ratio of Known Trade School Student-Communists to Total Number of Trade School Students

Total no. of trade school students, 1948-1949	*No. of known trade school student-Communists (largely in 1947-1949)*	%
674[a]	24[b]	3.6

[a]Iraq, *Annual Report on Progress of Education, 1955-1956*, p. 61.
[b]See Table A-4.

TABLE A-12

Ratio of Known Secondary School Student-Communists to Total Number of Secondary School Students

[1] *Total no. of students in state secondary schools, 1948-1949*	[2] *Total no. of students in private and state secondary schools, 1948-1949*	[3] *No. of known secondary school student-Communists (largely in 1947-1949)*	[3] as % of [1]	[3] as % of [2]
16,740[a]	26,928[b]	298[c]	1.8	1.1

[a]Iraq, *Annual Report on Progress of Education, 1955-1956, p. 54*.
[b]*Ibid*., pp. 54 and 95.
[c]See Table A-4.

TABLE A-13

Ratio of Known Lawyer-Communists to Total Number of Lawyers

Total no. of licensed lawyers in 1953[a]	*No. of known lawyer-Communists*	%
972[b]	22[c]	2.3

[a]It has not been possible to obtain figures for the number of lawyers prior to 1953.
[b]Government of Iraq, Ministry of Economics, Principal Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract, 1953*, p. 296.
[c]See Table A-4.

TABLE A-14

Ratio of Known Industrial Worker-Communists to Total Number of Industrial Workers

Estimated total no. of Iraqi industrial workers, 1948-1949	No. of industrial worker-Communists	%
50,000	337[a]	.7

[a]See Table A-4.

TABLE A-15

Ratio of Known Communists to Population of Iraq, 1947

Total no. of known Communists as % of total 1947 population of Iraq	Total no. of known Communists as % of total 1947 urban populationof Iraq
.04	.1

TABLE A-16

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Sex

	Higher echelons November 1941-June 1949		Middle echelons 1943-June 1949		Lower echelons and "active" rank and file 1947-June 1949	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Males	39	97.5	257	98.1	716	94.7
Females	1	2.5	5	1.9	40	5.3
Total	40	100.0	262	100.0	756	100.0

TABLE A-17

Female Communists (Fahd's Organization): Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin

	Higher echelons		Middle echelons		Lower echelons and "active" rank and file		Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in 1947 urban population of Greater Baghdād
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Moslems							
Shī'ī Arabs			1	20.0	3	7.5	35.8
Sunnī Arabs	1	100.0	2	40.0	25	62.5	33.9
Kurds					2	5.0	3.5
Turkomans					2	5.0	.2
Persians							4.5
Jews			2	40.0	7	17.5	14.9
Christians							
Arabized Chaldeans					1	2.5	
Assyrian							7.0
Armenian							
Sabean							.2
Yazīdīs							–
Total	1	100.0	5	100.0	40	100.0	100.0

TABLE A-18

Female Communists (Fahd's Organization): Occupation

	Higher echelons		Middle echelons		Lower echelons and "active" rank and file	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Students						
College	1	100.0	2	40.0	15	85.0
Secondary school					19	
Members of professions						
Physician			1	20.0		
Elementary school-teacher					1	5.0
Secondary school-teacher					1	
Unemployed			2	40.0	4	10.0
Total	1	100.0	5	100.0	40	100.0

TABLE A-19

Female Communists (Fahd's Organization): Place of Activity

Greater Baghdād	46
Other places	–
Total	46

TABLE A-20

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Education

Higher Echelons (November 1941-June 1949)

Level of education	*Fahd's Central Committees (November 1941-October 1948)*		*Provisional and "unauthorized" Central Committees (October 1948-June 1949)*	
	No. of members	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*
Private religious	1	3.6	–	–
Elementary	4	14.3	1	8.3
Secondary	7	25.0	5	41.7
College	15	53.5	6	50.0
Secondary and KUTV[a]	1[b]	3.6	–	–
Total	28	100.0	12	100.0

Middle Echelons (1943-June 1949)

Level of education	*Provinces*				*Greater Baghdād*		*All organizations*	
	Mas'ūls *of local party committees*		*Other members of committees*					
	No. of mas'ūls	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*
No education	–	–	6	4.7	–	–	6	2.3
Elementary	2	4.1	20	15.9	15	17.2	37	14.1
Secondary	32	65.3	83	65.9	31	35.6	146	55.7
College	11	22.4	12	9.5	36	41.4	59	22.5
No particulars	4	8.2	5	4.0	5	5.8	14	5.4
Total	49	100.0	126	100.0	87	100.0	262	100.0

Lower Echelons and "Active" Rank and File (1947-June 1949)

Level of education	*No. of Communists*	*%*
No education	151	20.0
Elementary	146	19.3
Secondary	292	38.6
College	124	16.4
Religious education	1	.1
No particulars	42	5.6
Total	756	100.0

[a]Communist University of Toilers of the East.

[b]Fahd.

TABLE A-21

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Age, Higher Echelons (November 1941-June 1949)

Age group in year of first appointment to Central Committee	*Fahd's Central Committees November 1941-October 1948*		*Provisional and "unauthorized" Central Committees October 1948-June 1949*	
	No. of members	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*
20 years	1	3.6	2	16.7
21-25 years	8	28.5	6[a]	50.0
26-30 years	9	32.2	2[b]	16.7
31-35 years	4	14.3	1[c]	8.3
36-40 years	3	10.7	–	–
51 years	1	3.6	–	–
No particulars	2	7.1	1	8.3
Total	28	100.0	12	100.0

[a]All below 25.
[b]Both 27 years.
[c]32 years.

TABLE A-22

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Age, Middle Echelons (1943-June 1949)

Age group in year of first appointment in position under analysis	*Provinces*				*Greater Baghdād*		*All organizations*	
	Mas'ūls *of local party committees*		*Other members of committees*					
	No. of mas'ūls	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*
15-20 years	11[a]	22.4	29[a]	23.1	11[a]	12.6	51[a]	19.5
21-25 years	19	38.8	57	45.2	43	49.4	119	45.4
26-30 years	2	4.1	15	11.9	16	18.4	33	12.6
31-35 years	7	14.3	13	10.3	9	10.3	29	11.1
36-40 years	1	2.05	2	1.6	3	3.5	6	2.3
46-50 years	1	2.05	–	–	–	–	1	.4
Precise age not known but above 20 and below 40[b]	6	12.2	9	7.1	5	5.8	20	7.6
No particulars	2[c]	4.1	1	.8	–	–	3	1.1
Total	49	100.0	126	100.0	87	100.0	262	100.0

[a]This group took over in 1949, the year of the "children Communists"; see Chapter 23.
[b]This is clear from available biographical data.
[c]These two *mas'ūls* took over in 1949 and most probably belonged to the lower age groups.

TABLE A-23

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Age, Lower Echelons and "Active" Rank and File

Age group in 1947[a]	*No.*	*%*
12 years	1	.1
13-14 years	19	2.5
15-17 years	138	18.3
18-20 years	195	25.8
21-25 years	207	27.4
26-30 years	82	10.9
31-35 years	35	4.6
36-40 years	7	.9
41-45 years	3	.4
46-50 years	2	.3
51-55 years	1	.1
No particulars	66	8.7
Total	756	100.0

[a]The bulk of the members entered the party between 1945 and 1948. Precise date of joining of party could not be determined in each particular case.

TABLE A-24

Male Population of Iraq According to Age Groups in Percentages in 1947

Age group	% of total 1947 male population[a]
Under 5 years	19.2
5- 9 years	15.8
10-19 years	15.0
20-29 years	9.4
30-39 years	11.8
40-49 years	11.9
50-59 years	6.9
60 and over	9.9
Unknown	.1
Total	100.0

[a]Excludes nomadic tribes in Mosul, Karbalā', Dulaim, and Muntafiq provinces.

Source: Based on figures on pp. 16-17 of *Statistical Abstract 1956* published by Principal Bureau of Statistics, Iraqi Ministry of Economics.

TABLE A-25

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Place of Birth

Place of birth	Urban population of province as % of total 1947 urban population of Iraq	Higher echelons: Fahd's Central Committees No. of members	%	Higher echelons: "Unauthorized" Central Committees No. of members	%	Middle echelons: Provinces Local party committees No. of mas'ūls	%	Provinces No. of other members	%	Greater Baghdād No. of members	%	Lower echelons and "active" rank and file No. of members	%	All echelons and "active" rank and file Total no. of members	%
Province of birth[a]															
Baghdād	33.7	9[b]	32.3	5	41.7	7	14.3	11	8.7	42	48.3	316	41.8	390[i]	36.9
Mosul	12.9	2[c]	7.1	–	–	2	4.1	3	2.4	4	4.6	30	4.0	41[j]	3.9
Baṣrah	8.7	5[d]	17.8	1	8.3	6	12.2	22	17.4	7	8.1	86	11.4	127[k]	12.0
Karbalā'	6.1	3[e]	10.7	1	8.3	5	10.2	15	11.9	4	4.6	31	4.1	59[l]	5.6
Kirkūk	6.0	–	–	–	–	1	2.0	1	.8	–	–	30	4.0	32[m]	3.0
Dīwāniyyah	5.1	2[f]	7.1	–	–	1	2.0	3	2.4	1	1.1	10	1.3	17[n]	1.6
Ḥillah	4.6	–	–	1	8.3	7	14.3	7	5.6	4	4.6	31	4.1	50[o]	4.7
'Amarāh	3.9	2[g]	7.1	–	–	5	10.2	15	11.9	6	6.9	44	5.8	72[p]	6.8
Sulaimāniyyah	3.6	–	–	2	16.7	5	10.2	16	12.7	3	3.4	63	8.3	89[q]	8.4
Muntafiq	3.5	–	–	–	–	4	8.2	9	7.1	2	2.3	22	2.9	37[r]	3.5
Diyālah	3.3	–	–	–	–	–	–	6	4.8	1	1.1	17	2.3	24[s]	2.3
Kūt	3.1	–	–	–	–	–	–	4	3.2	–	–	8	1.1	12[t]	1.1
Arbīl	3.1	3[h]	10.7	2	16.7	4	8.2	11	8.7	7	8.1	37	4.9	64[u]	6.0
Dulaim	2.4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	2.3	6	.8	8[v]	.8
Foreign country of birth															
Syria	–	1	3.6	–	–	–	–	1	.8	–	–	–	–	2	.2
Turkey	–	1	3.6	–	–	–	–	1	.8	2	2.3	1	.1	5	.5
Lebanon	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	.8	–	–	–	–	1	.1
Saudi Arabia	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	.1	1	.1
Soviet Union	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	.1	1[w]	.1
Iran	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	.1	1	.1
No particulars	–	–	–	–	–	2	4.1	–	–	2	2.3	21	2.8	25	2.3
Total	100.0	28	100.0	12	100.0	49	100.0	126	100.0	87	100.0	756	100.0	1,058	100.0

[a]For ethnic and sectarian character of province see Table 27-2.

[b]All: Baghdād city.

[c]All: Mosul city.

[d]4: Baṣrah city.

[e]All: Najaf.

[f]All: town of Dīwāniyyah.

[g]All: town of 'Amārah.

[h]All: town of Arbīl.

[i]331: Baghdād city; 44: Kāḍhimiyyah; 10: 'Aḍhamiyyah; 5: remainder of province.

[j]35: Mosul city; 6: rest of province.

[K]105: Baṣrah city (including al-'Ashshār); 8: Abū-l-Khaṣīb; 4: Qurnah; 4: az-Zubair; 6: rest of province.

[l]49: Najaf; 5: Kūfah; 5: Karbalā'.

[m]27: Kirkūk town; 5: rest of province.

[n]10: Samāwah; 6: Dīwāniyyah town; 1: Rumaithah.

[o]39: Ḥillah; 5: Hindiyyah; 4: Musayyib; 2: Maḥawīl.

[p]56: 'Amārah town; 7: Qal'at Ṣāliḥ; 3: 'Alī al-Gharbī; 3: al-Majarr aṣ-Ṣaghīr; 3: rest of province.

[q]79: Sulaimāniyyah town; 5: Ḥalabjah; 5: rest of province.

[r]30: Nāṣiriyyah; 4: Sūq ash-Shuyūkh; 3: rest of province.

[s]8: Ba'qūbah; 7: Mandalī; 6: Khāniqin; 3: rest of province.

[t]5: Ḥay; 4: Kūt; 3: rest of province.

[u]38: Arbīl town; 11: Shaqlāwah; 11: Koi Sanjaq; 4: rest of province.

[v]4: 'Ānah; 4: rest of province.

[w]Caucasus (this is Qāsim 'Alī Ḥusain, born 1927 and a baker's helper).

TABLE A-26

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Place of Activity

Province of activity[b]	Urban population of province as % of total 1947 urban population of Iraq	Higher echelons[a] — Fahd's Central Committees (1941-1948) No. of members	%	Higher echelons[a] — "Unauthorized" Central Committees (1948-June 1949) No. of members	%	Middle echelons[a] (1943-June 1949) — Provinces — Local party committees No. of successive mas'ūls	%	Provinces — Local party committees No. of other members	%	Greater Baghdād No. of members	%	Lower echelons and "active" rank and file (1947-June 1949)[a] No. of members	%	All echelons and "active" rank and file No. of members	%
No particulars												4	.6	4	.4
Baghdād	33.7	16	57.1	6	50.0	–	–	–	–	87	100.0	414	54.8	523[i]	49.4
Mosul[c]	12.9	–	–	–	–	1	2.0	2	1.6			14	1.8	17[j]	1.6
Baṣrah	8.7	4	14.3	1	8.3	5[d]	10.2	27	21.4			81	10.7	118[k]	11.2
Karbalā'	6.1	1	3.6	1	8.3	5	10.2	13	10.4			21	2.8	41[l]	3.9
Kirkūk	6.0	1	3.6	1	8.3	5[e]	10.2	10	7.9			39	5.2	56[m]	5.3
Dīwāniyyah[c]	5.1	–	–	–	–	2	4.0	3	2.4			14	1.8	19[n]	1.7
Ḥillah	4.6	–	–	–	–	7[f]	14.3	15[f]	11.9			25	3.3	47[o]	4.5
'Amārah	3.9	2	7.1	–	–	4	8.2	12	9.5			28	3.7	46[p]	4.3
Sulaimāniyyah	3.6	1	3.6	2	16.8	4	8.2	12	9.5			38	5.1	57[q]	5.4
Muntafiq	3.5	2	7.1	–	–	7	14.3	11	8.7			19	2.5	39[r]	3.7
Diyālah[c]	3.3	–	–	–	–	3	6.2	6	4.8			14	1.8	23[s]	2.2
Kūt[c]	3.1	–	–	–	–	2	4.0	5[g]	4.0			8[g]	1.1	15[t]	1.4
Arbīl	3.1	1	3.6	1	8.3	4	8.2	10	7.9			35	4.6	51[u]	4.8
Dulaim	2.4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–			2[h]	.2	2[v]	.2
Total	100.0	28	100.0	12	100.0	49	100.0	126	100.0	87	100.0	756	100.0	1,058	100.0

[a]In any comparison of the figures in the columns, it should be borne in mind that the leadership, particularly in the higher and middle levels, changed many times – at least five times – in the period under investigation. Hence the high ratio of leaders to lower echelons and rank and file.

[b]For ethnic and sectarian character of province see Table 27-2.

[c]The party was active in Dīwāniyyah and Kūt only in 1946-1948; in Mosul in 1948-1949, and in Diyālah intermittently in 1946-1948 and in April-June 1949. In Kūt most of the activity centered on the town of Ḥay. In regard to Mosul see also note f in Table 27-2.

[d]one of the five *mas'ūls* served at another point in time at 'Amārah.

[e]Two of the five *mas'ūls* served at other points in time at Mosul and Arbīl respectively.

[f]Ḥillah province had at one point (1948 to February 1949) two centers with local party *mas'ūls:* Ḥillah and Musayyib.

[g]The Kūt party organization was active only in 1947-1948. For the ratio of lower echelons and rank and file to middle echelons bear in mind note a above.

[h]The two members were active at K3 petroleum station. Since no formal party organization existed in Dulaim province, they and a leading member of the Armenian Branch Committee (Arām Boghos Kadoyān) formed part of a special Oil Workers' Party Committee at Ḥadīthah, which came directly under the Labor Office of the Politbureau.

[i]473: Baghdād city; 37: Kāḍhimiyyah; 13: 'Aḍhamiyyah.

[j]16: city of Mosul; 1: Tal-A'far.

[k]104: Baṣrah (including al-'Ashshār); 6: al-Ma'qal; 6: Abū-l-Khaṣīb; 2: Fao.

[l]31: Najaf; 8: Karbalā'; 2: Kūfah.

[m]54: Kirkūk (town and oilfields); 1: Tūz Kharmātū; 1: village of Ḥuwaijah.

[n]16: Dīwāniyyah; 3: Samāwah.

[o]37: Ḥillah; 6: Musayyib; 2: Hindiyyah; 2: Mahawīl.

[p]36: 'Amārah; 3: Qal'at Ṣāliḥ; 3: 'Alī al-Gharbī; 2: Kaḥlā'; 2: Kumait.

[q]47: Sulaimāniyyah; 4: Qal'at Dazah; 3: Ḥalabjah; 3: village of Barzinjah.

[r]36: Nāṣiriyyah; 3: Sūq ash-Shuyūkh.

[s]10: Ba'qūbah; 5: Khāniqin; 4: Mandalī; 2: village of Buhruz; 2: village of Zuhairāt.

[t]6: Kūt; 9: Ḥay.

[u]34: Arbīl; 8: Koi Sanjaq; 3: Shaqlāwah; 3: Rawandūz; 1: Makhmūr; 1: village of ʻAin Kāwah; 1: village of Jatinḫakah.

[v]2: K3 petroleum station.

TABLE A-27

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Religion, Sect and Ethnic Origin, Higher Echelons (1941-1949)

	Fahd's Central Committees (1941-1948)		*"Unauthorized" Central Committees (1948-1949)*		*Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1947 Urban population of*	
	No. of members	*%*	*No. of members*	*%*	*Greater Baghdād*	*All of Iraq*
Moslems						
Shīʻī Arabs	6	21.4	2	16.7	35.8	41.9
Sunnī Arabs	9	32.2	1	8.3	33.9	26.7
ʻAlawī Arabs	1[a]	3.6	–	–	–	–
Kurds	2[b]	7.1	5[c]	41.7	3.5	11.8
Turkomans	–	–	–	–	.2	3.2
Persians	–	–	1	8.3	4.5	3.1
Jews	3	10.7	2	16.7	14.9	7.0
Christians						
Arabized Chaldeans	4		1	8.3		
Arabized Assyrians	1	6 21.4			7.0[d]	5.9[d]
Armenians	1					
Sabean Arabs	1	3.6	–	–	.2	.3
Yazīdīs and Shabaks	–	–	–	–	–	.1
Total	28	100.0	12	100.0	100.0	100.0

[a]A native of Syria.

[b]It must be remembered that there were relatively few Kurds in the Iraqi C.P. prior to 1946.

[c]Includes 1 Fuwailī (Shīʻī) Kurd.

[d]Percentages for all Christians based on official 1947 Census.

TABLE A-28

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin, Middle Echelons (1943-June 1949)

	Provinces[a]					Greater Baghdād			All organizations		
	Local party committees[b]										
	No. of mas'ūls	%	No. of other members	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1947 urban population of provinces[a]	No. of Communists	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1947 urban population of Greater Baghdād	No. of Communists	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1947 urban population of Iraq
Moslems											
Shī'T Arabs	21	42.9	55	43.7	44.7	20	23.1	35.8	96	36.6	41.9
Sunnī Arabs	9[c]	18.4	16[c]	12.7	23.2	22	25.3	33.9	47	17.9	26.7
Kurds	13[d]	26.5	26	20.6	15.8	10[e]	11.5	3.5	49[e]	18.7	11.8
Turkomans	–	–	2	1.6	4.6	3	3.4	.2	5	1.9	3.2
Persians	–	–	4	3.2	2.3	2	2.3	4.5	6	2.3	3.1
Jews	1	2.0	5	4.0	3.3	16[f]	18.4	14.9	22[f]	8.4	7.0
Christians											
Chaldeans	2		4			6			12		
Kurds	–		2			–			2		
Assyrians	1	3 6.1	1	9 7.1	5.4	–	11 12.6	7.0	2	23 8.8	5.9
Armenians	–		2			5			7		
Sabeans	2	4.1	9	7.1	.4	3	3.4	.2	14	5.4	.3
Yazīdīs	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	.001	–	–	–
Shabaks	–	–	–	–	.3 –	–	–	–	–	–	.1 –
Total	49	100.0	126	100.0	100.0	87	100.0	100.0	262	100.0	100.0

[a]I.e., outside Greater Baghdād.

[b]Excluding Baghdād Party Committee.

[c]It should be borne in mind that the majority of the local centers were predominantly Shī'ī Arab or Kurdish in population.

[d]With three exceptions – that of one Arabized Fuwailī Kurd and two Arabized Kurds appointed respectively to Kūt, Nāṣiriyyah, and Karbalā' – Kurds were appointed only to Kurdish provinces.

[e]The number of Kurdish Communists in the middle echelons of the party in Greater Baghdād increased in a disproportionate manner after the arrest of Fahd in January 1947 and more particularly in the period October 1948-June 1949. Prior to 1947 there had been only two Kurds in Greater Baghdād's middle echelons.

[f]Six, it should be remembered, were leaders of the Communist party's auxiliary, the League, Against Zionism.

TABLE A-29

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin, Lower Echelons and "Active" Rank and File (1947-June 1949)

	Provinces[a]			Greater Baghdād			All organizations		
	No. of Communists	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1947 urban population of provinces[a]	No. of Communists	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1947 urban population of Greater Baghdād	No. of Communists	%	Sect or ethnic group's estimated % in total 1947 urban population of Iraq
Moslems									
Shī'ī Arabs	130	38.0	44.7	124	30.0	35.8	254	33.6	41.9
Sunnī Arabs	48	14.0	23.2	127	30.7	33.9	175	23.1	26.7
Arabs[b]	8	2.4		10	2.4		18	2.4	
Kurds	95	27.8	15.8	19	4.6	3.5	114	15.1	11.8
Turkomans	9	2.6	4.6	4	1.0	.2	13	1.7	3.2
Persians	–	–	2.3	–	–	4.5	–	–	3.1
Jews	26	7.6	3.3	87	21.0	14.9	113	15.0	7.0
Christians									
Chaldeans 10 Kurds 2 Assyrians 6 Armenians 2	20	5.8	5.4	21 – 9 4	34	8.2	7.0	31 2 15 6	54	7.2	5.9
Sabeans	5	1.5	.4	8	2.0	.2	13	1.7	.3
Yazīdīs	–	–	.3	1	.1	.001	1	.1	.1
Shabaks	1	.3		–	–	–	1	.1	
Total	342	100.0	100.0	414	100.0	100.0	756	100.0	100.0

[a]I.e., outside Greater Baghdād.

[b]Sectarian affiliation not known.

TABLE A-30

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Military Section; Echelons and "Active" Rank and File; Rank in Armed Forces[a]

	Higher echelons		Middle echelons (1943-1949)			Lower echelons and "active" rank and file		
			Provinces		Greater Baghdād			
	Fahd's Central Committees (1941-1948)	"Unauthorized" committees (1948-1949)	Local party committees: Mas'ūls	Local party committees: Other members		(1947-1949)	Total	%
Commissioned officers							6	26.1
Staff captains		–		–	2			
Lieutenants		1[b]		1	2[c]			
Noncommissioned officers							8	34.8
Warrant officers			1		1	1		
Sergeants						3		
Corporals			1			1		
Privates						9	9	39.1
Total	–	1	2	1	5	14	23	100.0

[a]Includes only military personnel, i.e., excludes civilian-Communists conducting activity among soldiers.

[b]An ex-lieutenant.

[c]Includes one ex-lieutenant.

TABLE A-31

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Military Section; Echelons and "Active" Rank and File; Place of Activity[a]

Place	No. of Communists	Unit or institution in which activity conducted
Greater Baghdād	7	Among others, the Royal Guard, the communications' unit at the Ministry of Defence, the military schools, and the units of the Third Division at ar-Rashīd and al-Washshāsh camps.[b]
Jalawlā'[c]	3	Reserve Mechanized Brigade, particularly the Khālid Tank Regiment.
Kirkūk	3	Units of the Second Division, particularly the Faiṣal Armored Regiment.
Dīwāniyyah	2	Units of the First Division, particularly the First Communications Battalion.
Baṣrah	2	Fifteenth Brigade of First Division.
Nāṣiriyyah	2	Second Battalion of Fourteenth Brigade of First Division.
Ba'qūbah	1	Third Communications' Battalion.
Mosul	1	Air force and engineering units.
Sulaimāniyyah	1	Garrison of town.
Ḥillah	1	Garrison of town.
Total	23	

[a]Includes only military personnel, i.e., excludes civilian-Communists conducting activity among soldiers.

[b]Ar-Rashīd Camp is to the south and al-Washshāsh camp to the west of Baghdād.

[c]Jalawlā' is in Diyālah province and to the northeast of Baghdād.

TABLE A-32

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Military Section; Echelons and "Active" Rank and File; Religion, Sect, and Ethnic Origin[a]

	Higher echelons		*Middle echelons (1943-1949)*			*Lower echelons and "active" rank and file*		
			Provinces		*Greater Baghdād*			
	Fahd's Central Committees (1941-1948)	*"Unauthorized" committees (1948-1949)*	*Local party committees* Mas'ūls	*Other members*		*(1947-1949)*	*Total*	*%*
Moslems								
Shī'ī Arabs		–	–	–	1	5	6	26.0
Sunnī Arabs		–	1	–	3	2	6	26.0
Kurds		1	1	1	1	3	7	30.4
Turkomans		–	–	–	–	1	1	4.4
Jews						1	1	4.4
Christians						1	1	4.4
Sabeans						1	1	4.4
Total	–	1	2	1	5	14	23	100.0

[a]Includes only military personnel, i.e., excludes civilian-Communists conducting activity among soldiers.

TABLE A-33

Iraqi Communist Party (Fahd's Organization): Military Section; Other Rank and File (1947-June 1949)[a]

	No. of party members	%
Rank		
Military college students	7	2.7
Other military students[b]	55	21.0
Warrant officers	14	5.3
Sergeants	7	2.7
Sergeant majors	2	.8
Corporals	12	4.6
Lance corporals	21	8.0
Soldier-craftsmen	26	9.9
Privates	118	45.0
Total	262	100.0
Religion, sect, and ethnic origin[c]		
Moslems		
Moslems whose sect or ethnic origin could not be determined	109	41.6
Shī'ī Arabs	82	31.3
Sunnī Arabs	30	11.5
Kurds	36	13.7
Christians	4	1.5
Sabean	1	.4
Total	262	100.0
Geographic distribution		
No information	74	28.2
Greater Baghdād	105	40.1
Rest of Iraq		31.7
Jalawlā'	19	
Dīwāniyyah	12	
Kirkūk	11	
Ba'qūbah	11	
Baṣrah	11	
Mosul	9	
Nāṣiriyyah	7	
Rawandūz	1	
Musayyib	1	
Samāwah	1	
Total	262	100.0

Military school, factory, or unit	
Schools	
At ar-Rashīd camp (south of Baghdād)	
Military College (at Ar-Rustamiyyah)	7
Aviation School	2
At al-Washshāsh camp (west of Baghdād)	
School of Military Crafts	5
School of Mechanical Transport	1
Communications' school in Karrādat Mariam (on the west side of Baghdād)	47
Factories	
al-'Ainah factory (in ar-Rashīd camp)	9
Military repairs plant (in aṣ-Ṣālḥiyyah on the west side of Baghdād)	1
Units attached to the various divisions[d]	
Communications' units	41
Tank and armored units	16
Artillery	16
Engineering	8
Infantry	63
Supply	3
Transport	6
Desert units	3
Other	
Ministry of Defence	1
Communications' unit at the Ministry of Defence	8
Military police (at the Ministry of Defence)	1
Royal Guard	
at the royal palace	5
at al-Washshāsh camp	9
Music band (near al-Mu'aḍḥḍham gate)	2
Veterinary unit (near al-Mu'aḍḥḍham gate)	2
Military hospital in ar-Rashīd camp	1
Field hospital, Baṣrah	1
Air force wireless unit	2
Divisional headquarters[e]	2
Total	262

[a]Some of the party members analyzed in this table had probably the rank of cell *munaḍḥḍhims*.

[b]Students at the Schools of Communications, Military Crafts, etc.

[c]The sect and ethnic origin of members were determined partly from data found in the papers of the "First Central Committee" Folder No. 1, Exhibits No. 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14, 22, 23, 31, 33, 35, 36, 49, 50, 64, and 68.

[d]I.e., to the Third Division with headquarters at Baghdād, or to the Second Division with headquarters at Kirkūk, or to the First Division with headquarters at Dīwāniyyah, or to the Reserve Mechanized Brigade at Jalawlā', a camp in Diyālah province to the northeast of Baghdād.

[e]The headquarters of the Third or First Division.

TABLE A-34

Iraqi Communist Party (1953-1954): Membership[a]

	No.	%
Members of the military organization of the party	92	18.1
Members of the civilian organization of the party	415	81.9
Total	507	100.0

[a]Members cited: a) in lists relating to the provincial party organizations seized at the party headquarters with Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī, the party's general secretary, on 13 April 1953; and b) in lists relating to the organizations of Greater Baghdād seized with Nāṣir 'Abbūd, member of the Central Committee, on 21 February 1954.

TABLE A-35

Military Organization of the Iraqi Communist Party (1953-1954): Rank in Armed Forces

		No. of party members cited in seized lists	%	% total known membership of military organization of party in Fahd's time (1940s)[a]
Commissioned officers		6	6.5	2.1
Staff major	1			
Second lieutenants	3			
"Officers"	2			
Noncommissioned officers		18	19.6	22.5
Warrant officers	4			
Sergeants	7			
Corporals	3			
Lance corporals	4			
Soldiers		66	71.7	53.7
Soldier-nurse	1			
Soldier-craftsmen	15			
Soldier-clerks	4			
Privates	46			
Military students		1	1.1	21.7
Student at military medical school	1			
Others		1	1.1	–
Military physician	1			
Total		92	100.0	100.0

[a]Based on Tables A-30 and A-33.

TABLE A-36

Military Organization of the Iraqi Communist Party (1953-1954): Place of Activity

	No. of party members cited in seized lists
Greater Baghdād	
ar-Rashīd camp (south of Baghdād)	21
Military hospital	3
Military engineering school	1
Military Medical School	1
Military court	1
Royal palace	2
al-Washshāsh camp (west of Baghdād)	10
School of Military Crafts	1
Total	40 (43.5%)
Provinces	
Jalawlā’ camp in Diyālah	9
Sa‘d camp in Ba‘qūbah, Diyālah	2
Manṣūriyyah camp in Dīwāniyyah	3
Dīwāniyyah	3
Ḥillah	1
Baṣrah	2
Kirkūk	2
Arbīl	1
Mosul	2
Total	25 (27.2%)
No particulars	27 (29.3%)
Total	92

TABLE A-37

Military Organization of the Iraqi Communist Party (1953-1954): Unit or Institution

	No. of party members cited in seized lists	*%*	*% total known membership of military organization in Fahd's time (1940s)*
Infantry	29	31.5	24.0
Communications	13	14.1	18.7
Tank and armor	12	13.0	6.1
Transport	8	8.7	2.3
Artillery	7	7.6	6.1
Antiaircraft	4		
Repairs	3		
Military hospital	3		
Military police	2		
Royal guard	2		
Air force	1		
Montane units	1		
Engineering	1		
Fire fighting	1		
Military medical school	1		
Military engineering school	1		
Military court	1		
School of military Crafts	1		
Military shoes factory[a]	1		
Communications' school	–	–	17.9
Total	92		

[a]This factory was probably located in Musayyib in Ḥillah province.

TABLE A-38

Iraqi Communist Party (1953-1954) Civilian and Military Organizations; Religious Denomination[a]

	No. of party members cited in seized lists	*%*	*Denomination's estimated % in total 1951 urban population of Iraq*
Moslems	488	96.3	92.9
Christians	14	2.8	6.4
Jews	4	.7	.3
Sabeans	1	.2	.3
Yazīdīs	–	–	.1
Total	507	100.0	100.0

[a]Only incomplete information is available on the sectarian and ethnic composition of party members.

TABLE A-39

Iraqi Communist Party (1953-1954): Civilian Organization; Place of Activity

Province	*Urban population of province as % of total 1951 urban population of Iraq (estimate)*	*No. of civilian party members in province cited in seized lists*	*% of total civilian membership cited in seized lists*	*Distribution: all known echelons and "active" rank and file of Fahd's organization (1940s)*[a]
Arab Shī'ī provinces				
Karbalā'[b]	6.6	48[d]	11.6	3.9
Muntafiq[c]	3.7	35	8.4	3.7
Hillah	4.8	21	5.1	4.5
Dīwāniyyah	5.5	15	3.6	1.7
'Amārah[c]	4.1	11	2.6	4.3
Kūt	3.3	11	2.6	1.4
	28.0		33.9	19.5
Arab Sunnī provinces				
Dulaim	2.5	2	.5	.2
Kurdish provinces				
Arbīl	3.3	36	8.7	4.8
Sulaimāniyyah	3.7	10	2.4	5.4
	7.0		11.1	10.2
Mixed provinces[e]				
Baghdād	31.0	139	33.5	49.4
Baṣrah	8.7	48	11.6	11.2
Mosul	13.3	16	3.9	1.6
Diyālah	3.3	12	2.9	2.2
Kirkūk	6.2	11	2.6	5.3
Total	100.0	415	100.0	99.6[f]

[a]See Table A-26.

[b]In Karbalā' live a substantial number of Persians.

[c]Small congregations of Sabeans live in Muntafiq and 'Amārah.

[d]Predominantly in the holy city of Najaf.

[e]Predominant ethnic and sectarian character of mixed provinces:

Baghdād: Overwhelmingly Arab; outside Greater Baghdād predominantly Sunnī, in Greater Baghdād probable Sunnī-

Shī'ī parity; substantial number of Christians, Kurds, and Persians.

Baṣrah: Predominantly Arab Shī'ī; Baṣrah town: near Sunnī-Shī'ī parity; a small Christian congregation.

Mosul: Predominantly Sunnī Arab in urban areas and Kurdish in rural areas; about one-fifth of urban and one-ninth of rural population: Chaldean and Assyrian Christians; a substantial number of Yazīdīs.

Diyālah: About one-fourth of population Kurds, one-half Shī'ī Arabs; rest Sunnī Arabs.

Kirkūk: About half of population Kurds; rest largely Turkomans, including Christian Turkomans; minorities of Arabs and Assyrians.

[f]No particulars = .4%.

TABLE A-40

Iraqi Communist Party (1953-1954): Occupation of Members Cited in Seized Lists

	No. of party members cited in lists	*% of total membership cited in lists*	*% of members whose occupation is known*	*% all known members of Fahd's organization (1940s)*
Members of the civilian organization of the party whom the police failed to capture or did not investigate and whose occupation is unknown	*159*	31.4	–	–
Students	*63*	12.4	18.1	27.6
College	8			
Secondary	19			
Elementary	1			
Unspecified	35			
Members of professions	*24*	4.7	6.9	9.7
Teachers	9			
Lawyers	8			
Physicians	4			
Petitions' writers	3			
White collar	*31*	6.1	8.9	9.1
Government officials	22			
Civic officials	2			
Employees of private firms	7			
Trading and industrial petty bourgeoisie	*40*	7.9	11.5	6.7
Small shopkeepers and petty traders	17			
Craftsmen (23)				
Tailors	9			
Carpenters	6			
Goldsmiths	3			
Barbers	3			
Ironers	2			
Peasants	*4*	.8	1.1	2.6
Members of armed forces[a]	*92*	18.1	26.4[b]	15.6
Members of police forces	*1*	.2	.3	.05
"Political prisoners"	*11*	2.2	3.2	–
Workers and semiproletarians	*79*	15.6	22.7	25.7
Industrial workers (27)				
Textile	7			
Mechanics	6			
Oil	3			
Printing	3			
Electricians	3			

Cigarettes	2			
Construction	1			
Carpentry	1			
Cement	1			
Transport workers (6)				
Railways	1			
Truck or bus drivers	5			
Workers (unspecified) (15)				
"Workers"	10			
"Unskilled workers"	13			
"Skilled workers"	15			
Semiproletarians (8)				
Coffee servants	4			
Office servants	2			
Porter	1			
Street vendor	1			
Unemployed	*3*	.6	.9	1.6
Total	507	100.0	100.0	98.6[c]

[a]For details see Table A-35.

[b]Bear in mind that the members whose occupation is not known are all civilians.

[c]No particulars: 1.4%.

TABLE A-41

Summary of the Available Biographical Details Relating to Members of the League for the Defence of Women's Rights, an Auxiliary of the Communist Party (1953)

Marital Status (all females)	
Single	23
Married	3
Total	26

Age Group in 1953	
15 to 20 years	15
21 to 29 years	11
Total	26

Occupation	
Students	19 (73.1%)
Lawyer	1
Teacher	1
Housewives	3
Unemployed	2
Total	26

TABLE A-42

Summary of the Biographical Details Cited in Membership Forms Found with Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī, General Secretary of the Iraqi Communist Party, on the Day of his Arrest (13 April 1953) and Relating to Iraqis Who Were Admitted into the Party in 1952 and in the First Quarter of 1953

Date of Admission	*No. of candidates*
1953	29
1952	37
Total	66

Sex	*No.*
Males	65
Females	1[a]
Total	66

Age Group in Year of Admission	*No.*	*%*
18-20 years	15	22.7
21-25 years	32	48.5
26-30 years	16	24.3
31-35 years	1	1.5
36-40 years	1	1.5
41-45 years	1	1.5
Total	66	100.0

Marital Status	*No.*	*%*
Single	48	72.7
Married	18	27.3
Total	66	100.0

Monthly income	*No.*	*%*
No income	3[b]	4.6
Unemployed	8	12.1
No fixed income	1[d]	1.5
1- 5 dīnārs[c]	13	19.7
6-10 dīnārs	21	31.8
11-15 dīnārs	8	12.1
16-20 dīnārs	7	10.6
21-30 dīnārs	3	4.6
31-40 dīnārs	2	3.0
Total	66	100.0

Class Origin as Cited by Candidates	*No.*	*%*
Working class	22	33.4
Toiling class	6	9.1
Earning class	2	3.0
Worker-peasant class	1	1.5
Peasant class	16	24.3
Rich peasant class	1	1.5
Petty official class	1	1.5
Petty bourgeoisie	14	21.2
Bourgeoisie	1	1.5
Mullah[e] class	1	1.5
Not stated	1	1.5
Total	66	100.0

Occupation		No.	%
Students		4	6.1
College	1		
Secondary	3		
Members of professions		2	3.0
White collar		4	6.1
Trading & industrial petty bourgeoisie		12	18.2
Petty traders	4		
Craftsmen	8		
Peasants		4	6.1
Workers & semiproletarians		25	37.8
Industrial workers	10		
Workers (unspecified)	6		
Semiproletarians[f]	9		
Members of armed forces		7	10.6
Noncommissioned officers	1		
Soldiers	6		
Unemployed		8	12.1
Total		66	100.0

Antecedent Activity	No.	%	
No activity	26	39.4	
Support of Communist party or of its auxiliaries or of Communist-influenced parties and organizations			
Ex-members of the Communist party	3[g]	4.6	51.6
"Supporters" of the Communist party	16	24.3	
Ex-members of the National Liberation party	6	9.1	
Members of labor unions	2	3.0	
Ex-member of student union	1	1.5	
Ex-members of the People's party	6	9.1	
Other activity			
Participant in the *Wathbah*	1	1.5	
Suffered imprisonment for participation in the "national movement"	2	3.0	
Ex-member of the Popular Front party	1	1.5	
Ex-members of the Socialist Party of the Nation	2	3.0	
Total	66	100.0	

[a]Leader of the League for the Defence of Women' Rights.

[b]2 students; 1 ex-political prisoner.

[c]1 dīnār= £1 = $2.80.

[d]Cloth seller.

[e]Man of religion.

[f]I.e., porters, janitors, coffee servants, and other menial workers.

[g]One left the party in 1948 "after it deviated"; another stepped back from it in 1944 because "the organizer, who was a Jew, attacked the Islamic faith; I was then a child and did not understand anything"; the third nominee had been expelled for his "mistakes."

TABLE A-43

Military Committee of the Communist Party Attached to the First Secretary of the Central Committee, Members in 1963

Name	*Function*	*Place of birth*	*Religion and ethnic origin*	*Former occupation*
Nāfi' Yūnis[a]	*Mas'ūl*[b] of committee	Arbīl	Sunnī Kurd	Lawyer
Thābet Ḥabīb al-'Ānī[a]	*Mas'ūl*, Ministry of Defence barracks	'Ānah	Sunnī Arab	Surveyor
'Abd-us-Sattār Mahdī[a]	*Mas'ūl*, Second Division	Baghdād	Sunnī Arab	Schoolteacher
Sulṭān Mulla 'Alī[a]	*Mas'ūl*, Abū Ghraib and al-Washshāsh camps and Third Division in Diyālah	Baṣrah	Shī'ī Arab	Schoolteacher; worker
'Alī Ḥusain ar-Rashīd[c]	*Mas'ūl*, First Division (except for units in Baṣrah)[d]	Takrīt	Sunnī Arab	Schoolteacher
Sattār Khḍayyer	*Mas'ūl*, units in Kurdistan	Baghdād	Sabean	Professional party worker
'Abd-ul-Laṭīf al-Ḥājj 'Alī Ḥaidar	*Mas'ūl*, ar-Rashīd camp	Baghdād	Shī'ī Failī Kurd	Professional party worker
'Alī Ibrahīm	*Mas'ūl*, Baghdād garrison, at-Tājī camp and Headquarters, Fifth Division		Shī'ī Arab	Professional party worker

[a]Also a member of the Central Committee.

[b]I.e., comrade-in-charge.

[c]A relative of General Ahmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, now president of the Republic.

[d]The *mas'ūl* of the military organization in Baṣrah was 'Abdallah 'Alak, who was attached directly to Nāfi' Yūnis.

Sources: 1963 statement of Sulṭān Mulla 'Alī, member of the Military Committee, in Police Files No. QS/5 and QS/120 and independent enquiries of this writer.

TABLE A-44

Communists in the Prison of Nugrat-is-Salman in 1964

	No.	%
Workers	191	16.7
Peasants	48	4.2
Members of armed forces		
Soldiers and noncommissioned officers	289	25.2
Officers and warrant officers	138	12.1
Members of professions	133	11.6
Teachers 98		
Engineers 16		
Physicians 10		
Lawyers 9		
Employees	91	7.9
Students	133	11.6
Kasabah[a]	105	9.2
Tradesmen	5	.4
Others	13	1.1
Total	1,146	100.0

[a]A general term applicable to humble people who have no regular employment and earn their livelihood by doing various odd jobs.

Source: The figures were cited in a petition written by the prisoners and published in the Communist *An-Nidā'*, 15 January 1965.

TABLE A-45

The Nāṣiriyyah Province Civilian Communist Party Organization in 1963

		No. of known party members	Population in 1957
Nāṣiriyyah city party organization		178	39,060
City committee (1 *mas'ūl*[a] and 5 members)	6		
Women's organization			
Mas'ūl of Women's committee[b]			
Other members of Women's committee	5		
Other members of Women's organization	14		
Students' organization			
Mas'ūl of students' committee[b]			
Other members of students' committee	5		
Members in an-Nāṣiriyyah Secondary School	31		
Members in an-Nāṣiriyyah Elementary Teachers' Training Institute	30		
as-Sarāi quarter organization			
Mas'ūl of as-Sarāi committee[b]			
Other members of as-Sarāi committee	5		
Other members of as-Sarāi organization	29		
as-Suwaij quarter organization			
Mas'ūl of as-Suwaij committee[b]			
Other members of as-Suwaij committee	6		
Other members of as-Suwaij organization	23		
as-Sharqiyyah and as-Sayf quarters organization			
Mas'ūl of ash-Sharqiyyah and as-Sayf committee[b]			
Other members of ash-Sharqiyyah-as-Sayf committee	5		
Other members of ash-Sharqiyyah-as-Sayf organization	19		
Sūq-ush-Shuyūkh district party organization		112	138,333[c]
District committee	7		
Sūq-ush-Shuyūkh town organization	58		
Sūq-ush-Shuyūkh district organization	47		
Shaṭrah district party organization		147	93,512[d]
District committee	7		
Shaṭrah town organization	128[e]		
Shaṭrah district organization	12		
Party organization of ar-Rifā'ī district and al-Qal'ah and al-Fajr towns		62	107,697
Committee	6		
ar-Rifā'ī district organization	18		
al-Qal'ah town organization	17		
al-Fajr town organization	21		
Total		499	

[a]Comrade-in-charge.

[b]The *mas'ūl* of this committee was at the same time a member of the city committee.

[c]Of whom 11,642 lived in the town of Sūq-ush-Shuyūkh.

[d]Of whom 12,835 lived in the town of Shaṭrah.

[e]Of whom 85 were students.

Source: First branch of Iraq's Directorate of Security.

TABLE A-46

The Baghdād Organizations of the Iraqi Communist Party in 1963

		No. of members known to the authorities
The Baghdād local committee		16
The bureaus attached to the Baghdād local committee		
The Organization Bureau		9
The Training Bureau		4
The Bureau for Action with a View to Peace in Kurdistan		4
The Cells' Bureau[a]		4
The branch committees attached to the Baghdād local committee and their subordinate organizations		
ar-Raṣāfah branch	committee	15
	organization	668
al-Karkh branch	committee	10
	organization	n.a.
al-Karrādah branch	committee	15
	organization	n.a.
al-Kāḍhimiyyah branch	committee	10
	organization	n.a.
al-A'ḍhamiyyah branch	committee	11
	organization	n.a.
peripheries' branch	committee	14
	organization	n.a.
east of the flood dike branch	committee	10
	organization	n.a.
intelligentsia branch committee		7
schoolteachers	subcommittee	4
	organization	102
university professors'	subcommittee	8
	organization	16
engineers'	subcommittee	8
	organization	n.a.
physicians'	subcommittee	4
	organization	n.a.
writers', journalists', and artists'	subcommittee	6
	organization	61
lawyers'	subcommittee	n.a.
	organization	n.a.
markets', banks', and commercial companies' branch committee		6
banks' branch organization		71
other branch organizations		33
branch committee for Baghdād's secondary schools		5
Baghdād's Secondary Schools' branch organization		217

in al-Karkh sector	23		
in al-Karrādah sector	66		
in ar-Raṣāfah sector			
ar-Raṣāfah committee	4		
as-Sanak quarter	21		
al-Faḍl school	25		
Central Preparatory School	34		
in aj-Ja'fariyyah School	23		
in health institutes	21		
branch committee for university students			10
School of Education		subcommittee	7
		organization	n.a.
School of Commerce		subcommittee	5
		organization	n.a.
Engineering Institutes		subcommittee	4
		organization	n.a.
Medical Institutes		subcommittee	7
		organization	n.a.
Law School		subcommittee	6
		organization	n.a.
female students'		subcommittee	9
		organization	n.a.
al-A'ḍhamiyyah institutes and colleges		subcommittee	5
		organization	n.a.
night institutes		subcommittee	4
		organization	n.a.
Baghdād policemen's party organization[b]			
Policemen's branch		committee	6
		organization	59
Baghdād workers' party organization[c]			
Workers' Bureau attached to the Central Committee			5
workers' committee for large-scale enterprises			7
subordinate organizations			n.a.
workers' committee for enterprises of medium scale			3
subordinate organizations			n.a.
workers' committee for small-scale enterprises			4
subordinate organizations			n.a.
Total			1,479
Number of members of the Baghdād party organizations in 1963 according to a member of the 1963 Baghdād local committee:			"around 5,000"[d]

[a]The members of this Bureau had the task of inspecting the Party's cells and reporting on their conditions to the Baghdād Local Committee.

[b]This organization came directly under the *mas'ūl* of the Military Committee of the party.

[c]This organization was not attached to the Baghdād Local Committee but came under the Central Committee of the Party.

[d]Conversation with this writer, May 1969.

n.a. Figures not available.

Source: The figures were obtained from charts in the First Branch of Iraq's Directorate of Security and in Police File QS/26; and from a 1963 statement by Ḥusain al-Wardī, a member of the Baghdād local committee, File No. QS/45.

TABLE A-47

Iraqi College Students' Elections in November 1959

College or institute	United Democratic list (pro-Communist), no. of successful candidates	United Student Front (pro-Ba'thī and pro-nationalist), no. of successful candidates	Independent list, no. of successful candidates
Medical School	10	–	2
School of Dentistry	9	–	1
School of Pharmacy	7	3	–
Veterinary School	10	–	–
College of Sciences	6	2	–
College of Arts	6	2	–
School of Law	4	4	–
College of Moslem Law	–	8	–
School of Commerce	7	–	1
School of Education	8	–	–
Liberation (Women's) College	–	8	–
School of Agriculture	8	–	–
School of Engineering	4	4	–
Survey Institute	4	–	–
Industrial Engineering Institute	6	–	–
Day Technical Institute	6	–	–
Night Technical Institute	6	–	–
Forestry Institute	1	1	–
Administration Institute	4	–	–
Accountancy Institute	2	–	–
Languages Institute	4	–	–
Physical Education Institute	6	–	–
Total	118 (76.6%)	32 (20.8%)	4 (2.6%)

TABLE A-48

The Baṣrah Workers' Organization of the Communist Party in 1948 and 1963

	No. of party members in 1948	No. of party members known to the authorities in 1963	Rough estimate of total no. of workers in undertaking in 1963
Mas'ūl of workers' committee attached to the Baṣrah local committee	1	1	
Member of workers' committee and *mas'ūl* of port workers	1	1	
Port workers' organization	31	112	7,000
Member of workers' committee and *mas'ūl* of oil workers	1	1	
Oil workers' organization	11	18	4,000
Member of workers' committee responsible for workers in other undertakings	1	1	
Workers' party organizations in other undertakings	20	67	?
Total.	66[a]	201[a]	

[a]The figures do not, of course, include the "supporters" and "friends" of the party.

Source: The 1963 figures were obtained from the First Branch of Iraq's Directorate of Security. For the 1948 figures, see Table 27-3.

TABLE A-49

Members of the Command of the Ba‘th Party in the Iraqi Region (1952-1970)

Name	Tenure	Nation	Religion or sect	Date of birth
Fū'ād ar-Rikābī, secretary	1952-1959	Arab	Shī'ī	1931
Fakhrī Qaddūrī	1952-1953	Arab	Sunnī	1929[a]
Sa'dūn Ḥammādī	1952-1953 1957-1958	Arab	Shī'ī	1930
Yaḥya Yasīn	1952-1954	Arab	Sunnī	1928[a]
Shams-ud-Dīn al-Kāḍhim	1952-1958	Arab	Shī'ī	1932[a]
'Adnān Luṭfī 'Uthmān	1952-1954	Arab (Jordanian)	Sunnī	1932[a]
Mahdī 'Āṣef	1954-1957	Arab	Shī'ī	1929[a]
'Abdallah ar-Rikābī[b]	1954-1957 1958-1959	Arab	Shī'ī	1933[a]
Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān	1954-1957 1960-1962	Arab	Sunnī	1927
Khālid 'Alī Ṣāleḥ ad-Dulaimī	1957-1959	Arab	Sunnī	1934
Karīm Shintāf	1958-1959 1962-1963	Arab	Sunnī	1934
Ṣāliḥ Sha'bān	1958-1959	Arab	Sunnī	1933
Ḥāzem Jawād[b]	1958 1959-1963	Arab	Shī'ī	1935
'Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa'dī member secretary	 1958 1960-1963	Arabized Fuwailī Kurd	Shī'ī	1928
Iyād Sa'īd Thābet	1958-1959	Arab	Sunnī	1933
Midḥat Jum'ah	1958-1959	Arab	Sunnī	1928[a]

Place of birth	*Occupation*	*Education*	*Class origin*
Nāṣiriyyah	Government engineer; minister of development 1958; minister of state 1958-1959	Engineering school, Baghdād	Petty official class; son of a minor government official.
Baghdād	Instructor, College of Commerce; minister of economics 1968-	Ph.D. economics	Commercial middle class; son of a merchant.
Karbalā'	Professor, College of Commerce; minister of agrarian reform 1963; minister of petroleum 1969-1974; minister for foreign affairs 1974-	Ph.D. agricultural economics, Wisconsin	Trading lower middle class; son of a draper.
al-A'ẓhamiyyah	Lawyer; governor of Baghdād 1963	School of Law, Baghdād	Middling official class; son of a government employee.
Karbalā'	Student; bank employee; director general of Rāfidain Bank 1963	College of Commerce, Baghdād	Commercial middle class; son of a rug merchant.
Irbid, Jordan	Student	Higher Teachers' Training College, Baghdād	?
Baṣrah	Worker in car repair shop	Elementary	Working class; son of a worker.
Nāṣiriyyah	Law student; lawyer	School of Law, Baghdad	Industrial lower middle class; son of a craftsman.
ash-Shūhānī[c]	Lawyer; ambassador to Moscow 1963	School of Law, Baghdād	Landowning shaikhly class; son of shaikh of al-'Azzah tribe.
Baghdād	Party worker	Secondary	Lower landowning class; son of a small landowner.
Ramādī	Schoolteacher; director Iraq News Agency, Beirut 1969-1970	College of Arts, Baghdād	Transport workers' class; son of a truck driver.
Ramādī	Bookstorekeeper	Secondary	Lower landowning class; son of a small landowner.
Nāṣiriyyah	Party worker	Expelled from Higher Teachers' Training College	Trading lower middle class; son of a *kaḥḥāl* (distributor of primitive medicament).
Baghdād; originally from Hibhib	Party worker; deputy premier, minister of interior 1963	College of Commerce	Peasant class; son of a gardener and agent of the landowning al-Ḥaidarī family.
Baghdād; originally from Mosul	Government employee	College of Commerce	Middling commercial class; son of a merchant.
Baghdād; originally from Takrīt	Bank cashier; governor of Mosul 1963	Secondary	Middling official class; son of a district officer.

Name	*Tenure*	*Nation*	*Religion or sect*	*Date of birth*
Ṭāleb Shabīb	1958-1959 1962-1963	Arab	Shī'ī	1931
Ḥamīd Khalkhāl	1960-1963	Arab	Shī'ī	1932
Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī	1960-1963	Arab	Shī'ī	1934
Daḥḥām al-Alūsī	1960-1962	Arab	Sunnī	1934[a]
'Abd-ul-Ḥusain 'Abd-us-Ṣāḥib	1960-1962	Arab	Shī'ī	1933[a]
Taḥsīn al-Mu'allah	1960-1962	Arab	Shī'ī	1930
Ḥamdī 'Abd-ul-Majīd	1962-1963	Arab	Sunnī	1929
General Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr member secretary general	 1963-1969 1969-date	Arab	Sunnī	1914
Hānī al-Fkaikī	1963	Arab	Shī'ī (mother: Sunnī)	1936
Staff Lieutenant General Ṣāliḥ Mahdī 'Ammāsh	1963 1966-1971	Arab	Sunnī	1925
'Adnān al-Qaṣṣāb	1963[e] 1965-1966	Arab	Sunnī	1936
Staff Major General Ṭāher Yaḥya[f]	1963[e]	Arab	Sunnī	1914
Staff Lieutenant Colonel 'Abd-us-Sattār Abd-ul-Laṭīf	1963[e]	Arab	Sunnī	1926
Colonel Muḥammad al-Mahdāwī[f]	1963[e]	Arab	Sunnī	?
Major 'Alī 'Araim	1963[e] 1966-1967	Arab	Sunnī	
Ṭāreq 'Azīz	1963[e]	Arab	Christian	1936[a]

Place of birth	*Occupation*	*Education*	*Class origin*
Rumaithah	Engineer	Completed 3 years at Engineering School, London University	Landowning aristocratic class; son of an impoverished landowner.
Hindiyyah	Secondary school-teacher	Higher Teachers' Training College	Peasant class; son of a peasant.
Najaf	Party worker	Expelled from College of Medicine for political reasons	Religious lower middle class; son of a *mu'min* (man of religion).
al-Alūs	Secondary school-teacher	Higher Teachers' Training College	Peasant class; son of a peasant.
Baghdād	Pharmacy student	Pharmacy School, Syrian University	Middling commercial class; son of a merchant.
Karbalā'	Physician; ambassador to Algeria 1968-1970; Dean, School of Medicine	School of Medicine	Middling landed religious class; son of sanctuary guide.
Baghdād; originally from 'Ānah	Secondary school-teacher	Higher Teachers' Training College	Trading lower middle class; son of a petty trader.
Takrīt	Premier 1963; president of Republic, commander-in-chief armed forces, premier, and chairman, Revolutionary Command Council 1968-date; and minister of defence 1973-1977	Military College	Petty landowning class; son of a notable of al-Begāt, a tribal group in Takrīt.
Baghdād	Party worker; member Revolutionary Command Council 1963	2 years Pharmacy School	Lower professional middle class; son of a lawyer.
Baghdād	Minister of defence 1963; deputy premier and minister of interior 1968-1970; vice president 1970-1971; and member Revolutionary Command Council 1968-1971	Military College and Staff College	Lower agricultural enterpreneurial class; son of a peasant-*dammān*.[d]
Baghdād	Government engineer; director of ports 1968-date	School of Engineering	Middling commercial and official class; son of a parliamentary official.
Baghdād; originally from Takrīt	Chief general staff 1963; premier 1963-1965 and 1967-1968	Military College and Staff College	Trading lower middle class; son of an *'alawjī* (small grain tradesman).
al-A'ḍhamiyyah	Minister of communications 1963	Military College and Staff College	Middling official class; son of a civil servant at the Ministry of Defence.
Baghdād	Commander of Third Tank Regiment 1963	Military College	Trading lower middle class; son of a small tradesman.
Fallūjah; originally from 'Ānah	Secretary to the minister of defence 1963	Military College	Middle landowning class; son of a middle landowner.
Mosul	Journalist; editor *Aj-Jamāhīr* 1963; schoolteacher	College of Arts	Lower landowning class; son of a small landowner.

Name	*Tenure*	*Nation*	*Religion or sect*	*Date of birth*
ʻAbd-us-Sattār ad-Dūrī	1963[e]	Arab	Sunnī	1934[a]
Fā'iq al-Bazzāz	1963[e]	Arab	Shīʻī	1937[a]
Ḥasan al-Ḥājj Waddāi al-ʻAṭiyyah	1963[e]	Arab	Shīʻī	1929[a]
Fū'ād Shāker Muṣṭafa	1963[e]	Arab	Sunnī	1930
Flight Colonel Munḍhir al-Wandāwī	1963[e]	Arab (mother: Turkoman)	Sunnī (mother: Shīʻī)	1935[a]
Ṣaddām Ḥusain at-Takrītī secretary member assistant secretary general	 1964-1968 1968-1969 1969-date	Arab	Sunnī	1937
ʻAbd-ul-Karīm ash-Shaikhlī	1964-1971	Arabized Kurd	Sunnī	1935[a]
ʻAbdallah Sallūm as-Sāmarrā'ī member secretary	 1964-1970 1968-1969	Arab	Sunnī	1932
ʻAbd-ul-Khāliq as-Sāmarrā'ī	1964-1973	Arab	Sunnī	1935
Murtaḍa al-Ḥadīthī	1964-1974	Arab	Sunnī	1939
Ṭaha aj-Jazrāwī secretary, party's Military Section	1966-date	Arab[g]	Sunnī	1939[a]
Ṣalāḥ ʻUmar al-ʻAlī at-Takrītī	1966-1970	Arab	Sunnī	1938[a]

Place of birth	*Occupation*	*Education*	*Class origin*
Baghdād; originally from ad-Dūr	Government official; director of broadcasting 1963	College of Arts	Working class; son of a railway worker.
Baghdād	Physician	School of Medicine	Middling commercial class; son of a merchant.
Dīwāniyyah	Lawyer; governor of Karbalā' 1963	School of Law	Landowning shaikhly class; son of a landowner and nephew of chief of al-Ḥmaidāt tribe.
'Ānah	Physician; governor of Kirkūk 1963	School of Medicine	Middling enterpreneurial and landowning class; son of a landowner and contractor.
Nāṣiriyyah	Commander of the Nationalist Guard 1963	Aviation school	Lower-middle official class; son of a cinema watchman and municipal tax collector.
Takrīt	Secondary schoolteacher; party worker; deputy chairman, Revolutionary Command Council 1968-	3 years at School of Law	Peasant class; son of a peasant from al-Begāt tribal group.
Baghdād	Party worker; minister for foreign affairs 1968-1971; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1971; chief delegate at the U.N. 1971-1978	2 years at School of Medicine.	Lower middle class; son of a schoolteacher.
Sāmarrā'	Schoolteacher; minister of information 1968-1969; minister of state 1969-1970; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1970; ambassador to India	B.A. education, M.A. Islamic history	Petty official class; son of a policeman.
Sāmarrā'	Party worker; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1973	Secondary school	Working class; son of a worker.
Baghdād; originally from Takrīt	Ex-schoolteacher; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1974; minister for foreign affairs 1971-1974	B.A. history	Lower landowning class; son of a small landowner.
Mosul	Ex-bank clerk; given the temporary rank of noncommissioned officer 1963 and of captain 1968; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-date; minister of industry 1972-1976	Secondary school	Peasant class; son of a gardener.
Takrīt	Ex-municipal clerk; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1970	Secondary school	Petty landowning class; son of a small landowner.

Name	Tenure	Nation	Religion or sect	Date of birth
ʻIzzat Muṣṭafa	1966-1968	Arab	Sunnī	
ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb Karīm	1968-1969	Arab	Shīʻī	1937
ʻIzzat ad-Dūrī	1968-date	Arab	Sunnī	1942

[a]Approximate date.
[b]A cousin of Fū'ād ar-Rikābī.
[c]A village in Diyālah province.
[d]A type of peasant-entrepreneur.

Place of birth	Occupation	Education	Class origin
ʻĀnah	Physician; minister of health 1968-1969; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1977	School of Medicine	Lower landowning class; son of a landowner.
Ḥillah	Ex-schoolteacher; party worker; killed in a car accident 1971	Secondary school	Peasant class; son of a peasant.
ad-Dūr (Sāmarra' district)	Party worker; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-date; minister of agrarian reform 1969-1974; minister of interior 1974-date	Secondary school	Lower vending class; son of a seller of ice.

[e]Held membership in the Baʻth Command for only three days (from 11 to 14 November 1963).
[f]Nominal Baʻthī, left Baʻth party toward the end of 1963.
[g]Said to be originally of the "Goran group" which lives in Jazīrat ibn ʻUmar in Turkey and is of Kurdish stock, but no confirmation for this could be obtained.

TABLE A-50

Members of the Baʻth National Command (March 1954 to February 1970)[a]

Name	*Duration of membership*	*No. of terms elected*	*Nationality*	*Year of birth*	*Place of birth*
Michel 'Aflaq[b]	1954-1966 1968-1970	8	Syrian	1910	Damascus
Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn al-Bīṭār	1954-1959	1	Syrian	1912	Damascus
Akram Ḥūrānī	1954-1959	1	Syrian	1912	Ḥamā
'Abdallah ar-Rimāwī	1954-1959	1	Jordanian (Palestinian)	1920	Beit Rīma[c]
'Abdallah Ni'wās	1954-1959	1	Jordanian (Palestinian)	1914	aṭ-Ṭaybeh[c]
Fū'ād ar-Rikābī	1954-1960	2	Iraqi	1931	Nāṣiriyyah
'Alī Jāber	1954-1963	4	Lebanese	1923	Nabaṭiyyah
Ṭāleb Shabīb	1959-1963	3	Iraqi	1931	Rumaithah
Faiṣal al-Khaizarān	1959-1962	2	Iraqi	1927	ash-Shūhānī[d]
'Abd-ul-Wahhāb Ashmaiṭillī	1959-1962	2	Lebanese	1933[e]	Beirūt
Ghāleb Yāghī	1959-1962	2	Lebanese	1934[e]	Ba'lbek
Khālid Yashruṭī	1959-1963	3	Lebanese (of Palestinian origin)	1935	Acre
Munīf ar-Razzāz[f]	1959-1966	6	Jordanian (of Syrian origin)	1917	Ḥamā
Ghassān Sharārah	1960-1962	1	Lebanese	1933[e]	Bint Jbail
'Abd-ur-Raḥmān al-Munīf	1960-1962	1	Jordanian (of Saudi Arabian origin)	1932[e]	Jordan
'Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa'dī	1962-1964	2	Iraqi	1928	Baghdād

Religion and sect	*Occupation*	*Education*	*Class origin*
Christian Orthodox	Ex-schoolteacher; minister of education 1949	Sorbonne (1928-1932)	Commercial middle class; son of a middling grain merchant.
Moslem Sunnī	Ex-schoolteacher; minister of foreign affairs 1956-1958; minister of guidance, UAR 1958-1959	Sorbonne (1929-1934)	Upper religious commercial middle class; son of a middling grain merchant.
Moslem Sunnī	Lawyer-politician; member, Syrian parliament 1943-1958; speaker 1957-1958; vice president UAR 1958-1959	School of Law, Damascus	Impoverished landed class; son of a landowner.
Moslem Sunnī	Lawyer; member of Jordanian parliament 1952 and 1956-1957; minister of state, 1956-1957	School of Law, Damascus	Rural religious middle class; son of a religious shaikh.
Christian Catholic	Lawyer; member of Jordanian parliament 1952	School of Law, Jerusalem	Peasant class; son of a peasant.
Moslem Shī'ī	Engineer; secretary, Ba'th Regional Command, Iraq 1952-1959	School of Engineering Baghdād	Petty official (lower middle) class; son of a minor government employee.
Moslem Shī'ī	Physician; secretary, Ba'th Regional Command, Lebanon	Medical School, Damascus	Commercial middle class; son of a middling cattle merchant.
Moslem Shī'ī	Engineer; minister for foreign affairs 1963	3 years at School of Engineering, London University	Impoverished landed class; son of a landowner.
Moslem Sunnī	Lawyer; ambassador to Moscow 1963	School of Law, Baghdād	Landowning shaikhly class; son of the shaikh of the tribe of al-'Azzah.
Moslem Sunnī	Schoolteacher	Licentiate in psychology, Lebanese University	Religious middle class; son of a religious shaikh and court clerk.
Moslem Shī'ī	Law student; lawyer	Law School, Damascus	Class of commercial local *za'īms* (bosses); son of a clan chieftain and owner of sheep and coffee-house.
Moslem Sunnī	Engineer	Engineering School, American University of Beirut	Landed religious class; son of a wealthy chief of ash-Shadhiliyyah mystic path.
Moslem Sunnī	Physician	Medical School, Qasr-ul-'Ainī, Egypt	Petty trading class, son of a tradesman.
Moslem Shī'ī	Lawyer-journalist	Law School, Cairo	Petty landed class; son of a poet and mayor of Bint Jbail.
Moslem Sunnī	Lawyer; later petroleum employee	Ph.D. in oil economics, Belgrade	Petty trading class; son of a tradesman.
Moslem Shī'ī	Party worker; secretary, Ba'th Regional Command, Iraq 1960-1963; deputy premier 1963	College of Commerce, Baghdād	Peasant class; son of a gardener.

Name	Duration of membership	No. of terms elected	Nationality	Year of birth	Place of birth
Ḥāzem Jawād	1962-1963	1	Iraqi	1935	Nāṣiriyyah
Jubrān Majdālanī	1962-1966	4	Lebanese	1928	Beirūt
Khālid al-'Alī	1962-1965	3	Lebanese	1933[e]	'Akkār
Amīn Shuqair	1962-1963	1	Jordanian (of Syrian origin)	1921[e]	Damascus
Major General Amīn al-Ḥāfidh[g]	1963-1966 1968-1970	4	Syrian	1922	Bāb-un-Neirab, an outskirt of Aleppo
Major General Ṣalāḥ Jadīd	1963-1965	2	Syrian	1926	Duwair, a village in Jablah district in 'Alawī mountains
Ḥammūd ash-Shūfī	1963-1964	1	Syrian	1933[e]	Ṣalkhad, a village in the Druze mountains
Brigadier Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr[h]	1963-1966 1968-1970	4	Iraqi	1914	Takrīt
Lieutenant General Ṣāliḥ Mahdī 'Ammāsh	1963-1964 1968-1970	2	Iraqi	1925	Baghdād
Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī	1963-1964	1	Iraqi	1934	Najaf
Ḥamdī 'Abd-ul-Majīd	1963-1964	1	Iraqi	1929	Baghdād
'Alī bin 'Āqil	1963-1964	1	Adenite	1929[e]	Ḥadramūt
Major General Muḥammad 'Umrān	1964-1965	1	Syrian	1922	al-Mukharram village, 'Alawī mountains
Manṣūr al-Aṭrash	1964-1966	2	Syrian	1925	al-Qarayyah village, Druze mountains

Religion and sect	*Occupation*	*Education*	*Class origin*
Moslem Shī'ī	Party worker; minister of state for presidential affairs 1963	Higher Teachers' Training College, Baghdād	Trading religious lower middle class; son of a *mu'azzī* (condoler) and *kaḥḥāl* (distributor of primitive medicament).
Christian Orthodox	Lawyer	Law School, Jesuit University, Beirut	Commercial middle class; son of a dealer in real estate.
Moslem Sunnī	Lawyer	Law School, Damascus	Petty landowning class; son of a landed local notable.
Moslem Sunnī	Pharmacist	School of Pharmacy, American University of Beirut	Middling trading class; son of a trader.
Moslem Sunnī	President, Revolutionary Command Council (later Presidency Council); commander-in-chief armed forces, Syria 1963-1966	Ḥoms Military Academy	Petty official (lower middle) class; son of a policeman.
Moslem 'Alawī	Director, officers' affairs at the General Staff 1963; chief of staff 1963-1965; member, Presidency Council 1964-1966; asst. secretary general, Syrian Ba'th Command 1965-1970	Homs Military Academy	Middling landed class; son of a district governor and landowner from the 'Alawī clan of al-Ḥaddādīn.
Druze	Party worker; member, Revolutionary Command Council, Syria 1963-1964	Licentiate Arabic literature, Damascus	Lower landed class; son of a small landowner.
Moslem Sunnī	Premier of Iraq 1963; president of Republic 1968-	Military College, Baghdād	Petty landowning class; son of a notable of al-Begāt tribe.
Moslem Sunnī	Minister of defence 1963; deputy premier and minister of interior 1968-1970; vice president 1970-1971	Military and Staff Colleges, Baghdād	Lower agricultural entrepreneurial class; son of a peasant-*ḍammān* (a type of peasant-entrepreneur).
Moslem Shī'ī	Party worker; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1963	Expelled from Medical School for political reasons	Religious lower middle class; son of a *mu'min* (itinerant man of religion).
Moslem Sunnī	Ex-schoolteacher; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1963	Higher Teachers' Training College	Trading lower middle class; son of a petty trader.
Moslem Zaidī	Party worker	Licentiate, Syrian University, Damascus	Working class, son of a worker.
Moslem 'Alawī	Deputy Premier, Syria 1963-1964; member, Presidency Council 1964-1966	Ḥoms Military Academy	Petty landowning class; son of a landed local notable from the 'Alawī clan of al-Khayyāṭīn.
Druze	Minister of Labor, Syria 1963-1964; member, Presidency Council 1964	B.A. politics, American University of Beirut; Law degree, Paris University	Landed aristocratic class; son of a middling landowner and leader of the Druzes.

Name	Duration of membership	No. of terms elected	Nationality	Year of birth	Place of birth
Shiblī al-'Aisamī[i]	1964-1966 1968-1970	3	Syrian	1922	Imtān village, Druze Mountains
'Alī al-Khalīl	1964-1966	2	Lebanese	1933	Tyre
'Abd-ul-Majīd ar-Rāfi'ī	1964-1965 1968-1970	2	Lebanese	1927	Tripoli
'Alī Ghannām	1964-1966	2	Saudi Arabian	1934[e]	Ḥijāz
Lieutenant Colonel Ḥāfiḍh al-Asad	1965-1966	1	Syrian	1930	Qirdāḥah village, 'Alawī mountains
Ibrahīm Mākhos	1965-1966	1	Syrian	1929	
Ṣaddām Ḥusain at-Takrītī	1965-1966	1	Iraqi	1937	Takrīt
Kārim Shintāf	1965-1966	1	Iraqi	1934	Ramādī
Ilyās Farah	1968-1970	1	Syrian	1925[e]	Jisr ash-Shugūr
Zayd Ḥaydar	1968-1970	1	Syrian (of Lebanese origin)	1934[e]	Ba'lbek
'Abd-ul-Karīm ash-Shaikhly	1968-1970	1	Iraqi	1935[e]	Baghdād
Shafīq al-Kamālī	1968-1970	1	Iraqi	1932[e]	Albū Kamāl
'Abd-ul-Khāliq as-Sāmarrā'ī	1968-1970	1	Iraqi	1935[e]	Sāmarrā'
Niqūla al-Firzlī	1968-1970	1	Lebanese	1938[e]	al-Qar'ūn
Muḥammad Sulaimān	1968-1970	1	Sudanese	1941[e]	Omdurmān

Religion and sect	*Occupation*	*Education*	*Class origin*
Druze	Schoolteacher; minister of guidance, Syria 1963-1964	Licentiate in history, Syrian University	Lower landed class; son of a small landowner.
Moslem Shī'ī	Secretary, Ba'th Regional Command, Lebanon 1964-1966	Ph.D. politics, American University, Washington, D.C.	Middling landed class; son of a landowner.
Moslem Sunnī	Physician	Medical Schools, Cairo and Lausanne	Middling landed religious class; son of a landed religious shaikh.
Moslem Sunnī	Party worker	Licentiate in arts	Petty trading class; son of a shepherd and small sheep trader.
Moslem 'Alawī	Commander of Syrian air force 1964-1970; minister of defence 1966-1971, premier 1970-1971; president of Republic 1971-date	Homs Military Academy	Petty landed class; son of a small landowner from the 'Alawī clan of al-Mutāwarah.
Moslem 'Alawī	Physician; minister for foreign affairs, Syria 1965-1967	Medical School, Damascus	Middling landed religious class; son of a landed chief of al-Mākhosiyyah mystic path.
Moslem Sunnī	Schoolteacher; deputy chairman, Revolutionary Command Council 1968-date	Law School, Baghdād	Peasant class; son of a peasant from al-Begāt tribal group.
Moslem Sunnī	Schoolteacher	College of Arts, Baghdād	Working class; son of a truck driver.
Christian Orthodox	Schoolteacher; director, Ba'th Party School, Baghdād	Doctorate in education, Switzerland	
Moslem Shī'ī	Professor of Political Economy	Doctorate in political economy, Yugoslavia	Petty landed class; son of a landed local *za'īm* (leader).
Moslem Sunnī	Party worker; minister for foreign affairs and member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1971	2 years at Medical School, Baghdād	Petty trading class; son of a tradesman.
Moslem Sunnī	Ex-schoolteacher; minister of youth 1968-1970; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1970	M.A. Cairo University	Petty trading class; son of a tradesman.
Moslem Sunnī	Party worker; member, Revolutionary Command Council 1969-1973	Secondary school	Working class; son of a worker.
Christian Orthodox	Engineer	M.S. engineering, Oklahoma	Artisans' class; son of a carpenter.
Moslem Sunnī	Party worker; killed in airplane crash 1972	Attended Syrian University	Aristocratic military class of middling income; son of a brigadier general of the Sudanese army from the family of al-Khalīfah 'Abdallah at-Ta'āyshī[j]

[a]Between March 1954 and February 1970 there were eight Ba'th National Commands. Their terms of office were: March 1954-August 1959; August 1959-October 1960; October 1960-mid-May 1962; mid-May 1962-October 1963; October 1963-February 1964; February 1964-April 1965; April 1965-February 1966; and February 1968-February 1970.

[b]Secretary general of the Ba'th party from March 1954 to April 1965, and from February 1968 onwards.

[c]A village in the district of Ramallah, Palestine.

[d]A village in the Diyālah province of Iraq.

[e]Approximate date.

[f]Secretary general of the Ba'th party from April 1965 to February 1966.

[g]Lieutenant general in 1964-1966; retired from service, 1966.
[h]Full general since 1968.
[i]Assistant secretary general of the Ba‘th party since 1965.
[j]A family that provided the successors of the Mahdī in the Sudān.

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File number	*Subject*
1	Nājī b. Yūsuf as-Suwaidī
6	Yūsuf b. Nu'mān as-Suwaidī
7	Sayyid Muhammad b. Ḥasan aṣ-Ṣadr
31	'Abd-ul-Wāḥid al-Ḥājj Sikar, Shaikh of al-Fatlah
52	Shaikh Mahdī al-Khāliṣī
94	Ja'far Abū-t-Timman
103	Nūrī Sa'īd Pasha
118	Kamandār al-Fahad, Shaikh of Banī Lām
124	Muḥammad al-'Araibī, Shaikh of Albū Muḥammad

127	Majīd al-Khalīfah, Shaikh of Albū Muḥammad
129	Shawwāi al-Fahad, Shaikh of al-Azairij
200	‘Abdallah Muḥammad al-Yāsīn, Shaikh of Mayyāḥ
213	Muṣṭafa Kemāl Pasha
239	al-Ḥizb-ul-Waṭariī (The National Party)
276	Muḥsin ash-Shallāsh
277	Sayyid Muḥsin Abū Tabīkh
281	Mawlūd Pasha Mukhliṣ
283	Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā
289	Jamīl Ṣidqī az-Zahāwī
436	Ra’ūf Chādirchī
438	Rif‘at Chādirchī
462	Yāsīn al-Hāshimī
533	‘Alwān b. Fulayyiḥ aj-Jindīl, Shaikh of Banī Lām
632	Ja‘far Agha
796	Jamīl al-Midfa‘ī
846	Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Qazzāz
897	Sayyid Muḥammad b. ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain
943	Salīm Khayyūn, Shaikh of Ech-Chibāyish, Banī Asad
1111	Ṭaha al-Hāshimī
1342	Yūsuf Zainal
1738	The League Against Colonial Oppression
1747	Rashīd ‘Alī al-Gailānī
1819	Troubles on Anīs Nuṣūlī’s Book
1924	Movements of Separation of Baṣrah from Iraq
2272	Discontent on the Lower Euphrates, 1930
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Unnumbered	Personal Letters (of Major J. F. Wilkins)

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(Secret) *Supplement to the Abstract of Intelligence* for the Years 1927-1930 (included the more important confidential information and served the function of the *Intelligence Reports* after 1926).
(Secret) *Personalities in Kurdistan* (Baghdad, 1919); (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdad and Kāḍhimain* (Baghdad, 1920); (Confidential) *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdad and Kāḍhimain* (Baghdad, 1920); (Confidential) *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimāniyyah, 1922-1923* (Baghdad, 1924).

The preceding four compilations were based on the reports of the political officers of the various administrative divisions and comprised entries for later years in the handwriting of Major J. F. Wilkins.

Public Security Files on Comintern activists and leading Iraqi Communists.

File number	*Subject*
272	Qāsim Ḥasan
333	Jamīl Tūmā
340	Ghālī Zuwayyid
357	‘Azīz Sharīf
367	Nūrī Rufa’īl
414	Zakī Khairī
479	‘Abd-ul-Qāder Ismā‘īl
487	Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf
488	Zakariyyah Eliās Dūkā
799	Dāūd aṣ-Ṣāyegh
937	Dr. Tomaniantz
1158	Arsen Kidour

1249 Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb (al-‘Abd al-Wāḥed)
1690 Shaul Sultanian *(alias* Sultanov)
1831 Elie Teper
2124 Hugo Rudolf
2129 Alexis N. Vasilev
2550 Ḥasan ‘Abbās al-Karbās
2610 ‘Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf
2652 Pyotr (Petros) Vasili
3067 ‘Āṣim Flayyeḥ
3076 Yūsuf Ismā‘īl
3078 Ḥamzah Salmān aj-Jubūrī
3281 Salīm ‘Abd-ul-Ghariī ach-Chalabī
3345 George Ḥannā Tallū
3347 Zakī Basīm
3368 Sharīf ash-Shaikh
3386 ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah
3397 Ḥusain ‘AIī al-Wardī
3436 Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī
3401 Ḥusain ar-Raḍī (or ar-Raḍawī)
3506 Jamāl-ud-Dīn Ḥaidar ‘Āṣim al-Ḥaidarī
3546 Sāmī Nāder
3625 ‘Adnān Jilmirān
4223 Muḥammad Ḥusain Abū-l-‘Īss
4242 ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj
4424 Ḥamīd ‘Uthmān
4583 Hādī Hāshem al-A‘ḍhamī
4877 ‘Umar ‘Alī-sh-Shaikh
5062 Farḥan Tu‘man
5504 Ḥikmān Fāris Qāder ar-Rubai‘ī
6140 Krikor Hagop Badrossian
6171 Zakiyyah Khalīfah

6307 Salīm Dāūd al-Fakhrī
6636 Samīr ‘Abd-ul-Aḥad George
6715 Zakī Waṭbān
6977 Rafīq Tawfīq Maḥmūd Jalāk
7019 Sālem Ḥamīd Muḥammad Mirza
7121 Nazīhah ad-Dulaimī
7680 Yahūda Ibrahīm Ṣiddīq
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8261 Bilāl ‘Azīz Shaikhū
8452 Sālem ‘Ubaid an-Nu‘mān
9630 Ḥamdī Ayyūb al-‘Anī
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al-‘Ahd (The Covenant)
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Nādī-1-Muthannah b. Ḥārithah ash-Shaibānī (The Club of Muthannah b. Ḥārithah ash-Shaibānī)
Nādī Baghdād (The Club of Baghdād)
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GLOSSARY

agha: Kurdish tribal chief.

Ahl-ul-Ibl: People of the Camel.

ʻālim: a man possessed of religious learning.

ʻamīd: (Syrian Baʻth party) "doyen."

amīr, chief or prince.

ashrāf (pl. of *sharīf*): claimants of descent from the Prophet.

aṣnāf: guilds.

attiṭyāb: good land.

al-ʻaunah: corvee labor.

awqāf (pi. of *waqf*): endowments for charitable purposes or for the benefit of the descendants of the founders.

chalabī: title of a merchant of high social standing.

charkhachīs: mounted guardsmen of tribal chiefs.

dawāfīʻ: men who had charge of the boats of a riverine tribal chief.

defīerdār: chief treasury official of a province in the Ottoman period.

ḍhalām: attendant of Kurdish tribal chieftain.

dhurriyyah waqf: entailed properties or funds the proceeds of which accrued to descendants of entailer.

dīrah: tribal domain.

dīwān-khānah: guest house of Kurdish tribal chief.

dūnum: 0.618 acre.

falālīḥ: Peasants.

al-farīḍah al-ʻārifah: a man learned in the tradition of the tribe (literally, "the knowing ordinance").

fatwah: a formal opinion on a point of Islamic law.

filiḥ: Peasants.

fir': (Ba'th party) branch.

firqah: (Ba'th party) division.

gorān: nontribal Kurdish Peasants.

ḥalāl: property of tribal shaikh or tribesman.

ḥalaqah: (Ba'th party) cell.

ḥasāwīs: casual agricultural laborers originating from Ḥasā, Saudi Arabia.

hawsah: tribal chant.

hūshiyyah: private armed guard of tribal shaikh.

imām: leader of congregational prayer.

Intifāḍah: name of uprising of 1952 or of 1956.

jihād: holy war.

kailah: unit of capacity equaling to 3¾ kilograms (in the province of 'Amārah).

kasabah: humble people who have no regular employment and earn their livelihood by doing various odd jobs.

khaṭīb: preacher.

khāwah: toll exacted by tribal shaikh.

khulām: house attendant of Kurdish tribal chief.

khums: fifth part of the income, a due incumbent upon faithful Shī'īs and the perquisite of claimants of descent from the Prophet.

lazmah: a type of land tenure.

Ma'dān: marsh-dwellers.

maḥallah: city quarter.

majlis-ul-ḥizb: (Ba'th) party council.

mallāk: landowner.

mann: unit of capacity equaling to 25 kilograms (in the Shāmiyyah region).

manṭaqah: (Communist) party unit based on subdistrict.

mas'ūl or ar-rafīq al-mas'ūl: comrade-in-charge.

mawālī: client tribesmen.

mawlid: Sunnī ceremonial observance in honor of the Prophets birthday.

millah: an officially recognized religious community.

mīrī (land): (land) belonging to the state.

mīrī ṣirf (land): "pure" state land, i.e., state land that is granted neither in *lazmah* (q.v.) nor in *ṭāpū* (q.v.).

miskīn: nontribal serf-like Kurdish peasant (literally, "miserable").

muḍīf: tribal guest house.

muftī: authoritative exponent of Islamic law.

mujtahid: Shī'ī legist and man of religion with power of making independent decisions.

mullah: a man learned in religion.

multazim: tax-farmer.

mūman: itineranī man of religion.

munaḍhḍhim: (Communist party) organizer.

muqāṭa'ah: estate.

murāsil: (Communist party) courier.

mustakhdim: holder of nonpensionable official appointment.

mutasarrif: governor of a province.

naqīb: marshal of the claimants of descent from the Prophet.

pyshtmala: armed retainers of Kurdish tribal chief.

qāri': professional reader.

qahwajī: tribal shaikh's coffee-maker.

qāim-maqām: subgovernor of province.

qāwūsh: prison barrack.

qiṭā': (Communist) party unit based on subdistrict.

qutr.(Ba'th party) region.

radd: client tribesmen.

ra'iyyah: subjects.

Ra's-ut-Tujjār: Chief of the Merchants.

sādah (pi. of *sayyid)*: claimants of descent from the Prophet.

ṣairafah: money-dealing or money-lending business.

salaf: collection of rural dwellings.

saniyyah (land): crown (land).

sarīfah: mat- or mud-hut.

ṣarrāf: money dealer.

ṣarrāf bāshī: chief banker.

sayyid: singular of *sādah* (q.v.).

shabbah: a unit of a shaikhly estate.

shaikh (tribal): Arab tribal chief.

shaikh-ul-mashāyikh: chief of tribal chiefs.

Shargawiyyas: the "Easterners," i.e., the migrants from the ʻAmārah tribal country.

sharī'ah: the canon law of Islam.

Shāwiyah: People of the Sheep.

shiḥnah or *shiḥniyyah*: men who guarded the crop for the tribal shaikh.

shuʻbah: (Baʻth party) section.

shurūgīs: see Shargawiyyas.

shuyūkh aṣl (pi. of shaikh asl): literally, "shaikhs of noble lineage"; see above, pp. 158-159.

sirkāl: supervisor of cultivation.

ṣūfīs: mystics.

ṭāʻāb: a peasant with a proprietary right in a portion of the land planted by him with date palms.

ṭāpū: a type of land tenure.

ta'ziyah: Shīʻī lamentation for the martyred Ḥusain, grandson of the Prophet.

tghār: two tons.

tisyār: passage toll exacted by tribal shaikh.

ʻuḍw ʻāmil: (Baʻth party) "active member."

ukhuwwah (also *khāwah)*: toll exacted by tribal shaikh (literally, "brotherhood"),

ʻulamā': plural of *ʻālim* (q.v.).

‘urf: tradition.
waksah: dishonor.
wālī: Ottoman governor.
waqf: singular of *awqāf* (q.v.).
al-Wathbah: name of the uprising of 1948 (literally, “the Leap”).
wilāyah: Ottoman administrative unit.
zilim: armed retainers of tribal shaikh.

NOTES

1 The “Old Social Classes”: Practical and Theoretical Clarifications; Applicability of Concept; Difficulties of Analysis

[1]These constituents of the landed class are identified in Book One, Part II.

[2]See below, p. 220.

[3]Ibn Khaldūn, *Al-Muqaddimah* (Cairo: Muṣṭafa Muḥammad Printing Press, n.d.), Book I, Sec. 3, Ch. 43, p. 288.

[4]For this concentration see Tables 5-1 and 5-3.

[5]See pp. 105-107.

[6]See Tables 7-2 and 10-4.

[7]*Ibid*., and Tables 5-4, 6-1, and 7-3.

[8]See pp. 352 and 354-357.

[9]Consult Chapters 17, 22, 30, and 41.

2 Of the Diversity of Iraqis, the Incohesiveness of Their Society, and Their Progress in the Monarchic Period toward a Consolidated Political Structure

[1]Sulaimān Fā’iq (an Ottoman provincial governor and father of Iraqi ex-Premier Ḥikmat Sulaimān), *T*ā *rīkh Baghdād* (“The History of Baghdad”), tr. from the Turkish by Mūsa Kāḍhim Nawras (Baghdad, 1962), p. 174.

[2]Isma‘īl Ḥaqqī Bey Bābā Zādeh, “From Isṭambūl to Baghdād” (1910). This book was translated at length by the *Revue du Monde Musulman*,

XIV: 5 (May 1911), For the quoted verse, see p. 255.

[3]"Make the Religion Triumph! O Muḥammad!"

[4]This is a clearly Sunnī slogan and was used, for example, by demonstrators on 6 October 1911, against Italy's invasion of Tripoli; *Lughat-ul-'Arab*, 9 October 1911, quoted by *Revue du Monde Musulman*, 6th Year, XVIII (February-March 1912), 223-224.

[5]The *wilāyah* was an Ottoman administrative division.

[6]See p. 77.

[7]See p. 68.

[8]Farīq al-Muzhir Āl-Fir'aun, *Al-Ḥaqā'iq-un-Nāṣi'ah Fī-th-Thawrat-il-'Irāqiyyah Sanat 1920 wa Natāijuhā* ("Luminous Facts on the Iraqi Insurrection of 1920 and Its Results") (Baghdad, 1952), I, 22.

[9]For example, the weights of Baghdād were: the *ṭghār* (2000 kilos), the *waznah* (100 kilos), the big *mann* (24 kilos), the small *mann* (12 kilos), and the *uqiyyah* (2 kilos). The weights of other towns, while bearing the same names, were of different amounts. Thus the *waznah* of Ḥillah equalled 102,565 kilos, and of Dīwāniyyah 108.835 kilos and not 100, as in Baghdād. Similarly, the *ṭghār* of Baṣrah equalled 1538 kilos and not 2000, as that of Baghdād. See *Dalīl-ul-Mamlakat-il-'Irāqiyyah*. . . ("The Directory of the Iraqi Kingdom for 1935-1936") (Baghdad, 1935), pp. 59-60.

[10]For example, even in 1921-1922 the tax conversion rates for wheat, i.e., the rates at which the tax in kind was converted into cash, and which reflected the prevalent prices, were 250, 384, and 400 rupees per ton at the province headquarters of Baghdād, Mosul, and Baṣrah, respectively. See Great Britain, *Report*. . . *on the Administration of Iraq for April 1922-March 1923* (London, 1924), p. 102.

[11]Thus before World War I the Persian currency appears to have been more widely used than the Turkish currency in the Kurdish districts of Iraq. See Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie* (Paris, 1894), III, 38-39. In Baṣrah, Indian and Persian coinage were in large use. See Great Britain, Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Arabia, Mesopotamia*. . . (London, 1919), pp. 119-120. The official currency was, of course, Turkish.

[12]This government assumed power after the 1908 Revolution in Turkey.

[13]The descendants of the Prophet.

[14]Landlords.

[15]Sulaimān Faiḍī, *Fī Ghamrat-in-Niḍāl* (“In the Throes of the Struggle”) (Baghdad, 1952), p. 78. The objection obviously betrays also a class consciousness.

[16]See Chapter 4.

[17]A section of this quarter was inhabited by Jews.

[18]Some Moslem families lived in these quarters. The Sunnī Pāchacrīs, for example, had their residence in Ra’s-il-Qaryah.

[19]A number of well-known religious families had their homes here, such as the Gailāinīs, who lived in Bāb-ish-Shaikh because the Qādiriyyah shrine, built in memory of their ancestor, Shaikh ‘Abd-ul-Qādir al-Gailānī, was located in this quarter.

[20]*Kasabah* is a general term applicable to humble people who have no regular employment and earn their livelihood by doing various odd jobs.

[21]Conversations with Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, Qāsim Ḥasan, Jamīl Kubbah, and other Baghdādīs on various occasions.

[22]Mūsa b. Ja‘far al-Kādhim and Muḥamma b. ‘Alī aj-Jawād. The *imāms* were, in the eyes of the Shī‘īs, the only legitimate rulers and supreme pontiffs of Islam.

[23]For the last point, see Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Alūsī, *Tārīkh Masājid Baghdād wa Āthārihā* (“The History of the Mosques and Ancient Monuments of Baghdad”) (Baghdad, 1927), p. 26, note.

[24]Even as late as the thirties there were such instances in Najaf. The large al-Ḅahhāsh family, for example, had a street of its own in the Mishrāq quarter of that city, and its members were mostly jewelers and moneychangers. See Ja‘far b. Shaikh Bāqir Āl-Maḥbūbah an-Najafī, *Mādī-n-Najaf wa Ḥāḍiruhā* (“The Past of Najaf and Its Present”) (Sidon, 1934), I, 201.

[25]A *millah* was an officially recognized religious community.

[26]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918 of Divisions and districts of the Occupied Territories of Mesopotamia* (1919), I, 68.

[27]*Faṣl* literally means the deciding of disputes, but here refers to blood money, that is, blood is paid for with money instead of with blood, and

thus the blood feud is wiped out.

[28]Kāḍhim Ṣubḥī was the shaikh or headman of the quarter.

[29]For the text of the constitution, see Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 111.

[30]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities. Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdad and Kāḍhimain)* (1920), p. 121.

[31]*Ibid*., p. 101.

[32]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 195/2308, Report by H. E. Wilkie Young, Mosul, accompanying dispatch of 28 January 1909. For text of report, see also *Middle Eastern Studies*, VII, No. 2 (May 1971), 229 ff.

[33]*Lughat-ul-‘Arab*, 9 October 1911, quoted by *Revue du Monde Musulman*, 6th Year, XVIII (February-March 1912), in its Review of the Arab Press section, p. 223, note.

[34]Bābān, “From Isṭambūl to Baghdād,” p. 256.

[35]The duties are summarized in the *Report by His Britannic Majesty’s Government to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of Iraq for the Year 1926* (London, 1927), p. 37. The regulations were issued by the Ottoman government, which may have itself prescribed the duties in question. On the other hand, the regulations may have merely reflected practices habitually carried on by the *aṣnāf*.

[36]See pp. 73 ff.

[37]See p. 240.

[38]Grandson of the Prophet.

[39]‘Alī Āl-Bāzirgān, *Al-Waqāi’ ul-Ḥaqīqiyyah fī-th-Thawrat-il-‘Irāqiyyah* (“The Real Facts about the Iraqi Revolt”) (Baghdad, 1954), pp. 90 and 94; and Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia* (London, 1920), p. 140.

[40]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/63 E 862/6/93, Letter of 4 December 1928 from Sir H. Dobbs, Baghdād, to Mr. Amery, London.

[41]The number of state elementary school students increased from 8001 in 1920-1921 to 89,482 in 1939-1940, and the number of state secondary school students from 110 to 13,959 in the same period: Iraq, Ministry of Education, *At-Taqrīr-us-Sanawī ‘An Sayr-il-Ma‘ārif*... (“Annual Report

on the Progress of Education for the Year 1955-1956") (Baghdad, 1957), pp. 43 and 54.

[42]For the text of the memorandum, which was written in March 1933, see ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārat-il-ʻIrāqiyyah* ("The History of the Iraqi Cabinets") (Sidon, 1953), III, 286-293. For the quoted statement, see p. 289.

[43]For this point I am indebted to Kāmel ach-Chādirchī of the National Democratic party: conversation, February 1962.

[44]Faiṣal I's confidential memorandum of March 1933, al-Ḥasanī, Tārīkh-ul-Wizārat,' III, 288.

[45]*Ibid*., p. 289.

[46]*Ibid*., p. 290.

[47]Stephen H. Longrigg, *Iraq 1900 to 1950. A Political, Social, and Economic History* (Oxford, 1953), p. 246.

[48]*Ibid*, p. 166.

[49]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20013/E 6797/1419/93, Minutes by J. G. Ward of 30 October 1936.

[50]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/23217/E 2372/72/93, Quarterly Report No. 26 by the British Military Mission on the Iraqi Army and Royal Iraqi Air Force for the Quarter Ending 28 February 1939.

[51]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20796/E 44/14/93, Letter of 22 December 1936 from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to Anthony Eden, London.

[52]Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf* (1944), pp. 581 and 583.

[53]The ex-Sharīfian officers were the Iraqi officers in the Ottoman army who during World War I abandoned the Ottoman cause and attached themselves to the service of the family of Sharīf Ḥusain of Mecca, and especially of his son Faiṣal, then in active revolt against the Turks.

[54]Nūrī as-Saʻīd and his brother-in-law, Jaʻfar al-ʻAskarī, who was also an ex-Sharīfian officer, had followers in the army since the twenties, and used their position to combat the influence upon the military of Yasīn al-Hāshimī, another soldier-politician.

[55]The term “middle class,” as used in these pages, refers to that composite part of society which is plural in its functions but has in common a middling income or a middling status, and which includes merchants, tradesmen, landowners, army officers, students, members of professions, civil servants, and employees of private companies. It would be a mistake to make too sharp a distinction between one section of this class and another, say, between army officers and tradesmen or landowners, for it must not be forgotten that the real unit of class is not the individual but the family, and that members of one middle class family pursue different professions. Thus out of the fifteen members of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers and the nine members of the Committee-in-Reserve of the Free Officers, who prepared for the coup of 14 July 1958, seven and six respectively were sons of merchants or middlemen, or small or middling landowners (see Tables 41-2, 41-3, and 41-4). Colonel Salāḥ-ud-Dīn as-Ṣabbāgh, the moving spirit behind the politically minded military element in the years 1938-1941, was also the son of a merchant and landowner. See his *Fursān-ul-‘Urūbah fī-l-‘Irāq* (“The Knights of Arabism in Iraq”) (Damascus, 1956), p. 21.

[56]The ex-Sharīfian officers were by origin from the middle or humbler walks of life, but by this time many of them had become propertied and, though not yet fully accepted socially by the old families, formed part of the political elite.

[57]Conversation of King Ghāzī with British ambassador, Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/21846/E 172/45/93, Letter of 25 December 1937 from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to Anthony Eden, London.

[58]For these figures, see Retired Staff Major Maḥmūd ad-Durrah’s *Al-Ḥarb al-‘Irāqiyyah al-Brīṭāniyyah, 1941* (“The British-Iraqi War of 1941”) (Beirut, 1969), p. 243.

[59]Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract, 1943* (Baghdād, 1945), pp. 29-30.

[60]Ad-Durrah, *Al-Ḥarb*, p. 420.

[61]Colonel Gerald de Gaury, *Three Kings in Baghdād, 1921-1958* (London, 1961), p. 146.

[62]Retired Staff General Ṣāliḥ Ṣā‘ib aj-Jubūrī (ex-chief of staff of the Iraqi army), *Miḥnat-u-Filasṭīn wa Asrāruhā-s-Siyāsiyyah wa-*

l-‘Askariyyah (“The Misfortune of Palestine and Its Political and Military Secrets”) (Beirut, 1970), pp. 142-144.

[63]Consult Table 41-1.

[64]See Chapter 22.

[65]See Chapter 30.

[66]See Chapter 39.

[67]See pp. 132 ff., 142 ff., 150 ff., and 470 ff.

[68]See p. 680.

[69]Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf*, p. 562.

[70]Lord Salter, *The Development of Iraq. A Plan of Action* (Baghdād, 1955), p. 61.

[71]For the 1920 figure, see Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia* (1920), p. 122. For the other figures, see Iraq, Ministry of Finance, *Budget of the Iraq Government for the Financial Year 1938*, Consolidated Statement Q, p. 14; and Iraq, *Al-Waqāi‘ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 14122 of 29 March 1958, Schedule Q of General Budget Law for the Financial Year 1958. All figures include teachers, but exclude foreign personnel and Iraqi *mustakhdims*, i.e., holders of nonpensionable appointments.

[72]These figures include foreign personnel, but exclude nontechnical employees, who numbered 4,633 in 1927, 6,800 in 1937, and 11,798 in 1957. The number of Iraqi and foreign officers, officials, and employees of the port was 427 in 1920, and 402 in 1930. No figures are available for subsequent years. Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration*, p. 122; Great Britain, *Special Report. . . on the Progress of Iraq during the Period 1920-1931* (London, 1931), pp. 168 and 176; Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract. . . for the Years 1927/28-1937/38*, p. Ill; and Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Abstract, 1959*, p. 317.

[73]Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration*, p. 122; and Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract, 1943*, p. 24, and *1958*, p. 170.

[74]See Table 6-2.

[75]*Ibid*.

[76]The number of Iraqis sent abroad for a higher education also increased from 9 in 1921/22 to 66 in 1938/39, and 859 in 1958/59. For all figures except those for 1958/59, see Iraq, Ministry of Education, *At-Taqrīr-us-Sanawī. . . 1955-56*, pp. 54, 68, 69, 75, and 175. For the 1958/59 figures, consult Table 17-5.

3 The Geographic Distribution of the Principal Racial-Religious Groups and Relevant Causative Factors

[1]I.e., the provinces of Kūt (now Wāsiṭ), Ḥillah (now Babylon), Karbalā', Dīwāniyyah (now Qādisiyyah), Muntafiq (now Thī-Qār), ʻAmārah (now Maysān), and Baṣrah.

[2]The town grew around the tomb of Zubair, a companion of the Prophet who died in 656 fighting ʻAlī over the issue of the succession to the caliphate, and the Shīʻīs, it will be remembered, are "Shīʻat ʻAlī," i.e., "the party of ʻAlī." The present Zubair dates only from the latter part of the 18th century, and a large part of its inhabitants are recent migrants from Najd.

[3]A town to the west of Mosul.

[4]All three towns are to the south of Kirkūk.

[5]See, e.g., Ibn Sanad al-Baṣrī al-Wā'ilī (1766-1834), *Maṭāliʻ--us-Suʻūd Biṭayyibī Akhbār al-Wafī Dāūd* ("Fortune's Preludes to the Happy Annals of the Governor *Dāūd*") as abridged in 1873 by Amīn b. Ḥasan al-Ḥalwānī al-Madanī (Cairo, 1951), p. 39.

[6]The Sūfī order with the largest number of *takyas*, or oratories, in the Arab areas appears to have been Rifāʻism, but there were also Qādirī and Naqsh-bandī Arab *takyas*. The Rifāʻī order was founded by Shaikh Aḥmad ar-Rifā'ī (1118-1183), whose tomb stands east of the town of Ḥayy. For the founders of the Qādirī and Naqshbandī orders, see p. 43.

[7]I.e., ʻAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, a cousin and the son-in-law of the Prophet.

[8]Son of ʻAlī.

[9]Abū Bakr al-Khawārizmī, *Ar-Rasā'il* ("The Letters") (Bombay, A.H. 1301 or A.D. 1885), pp. 45-46.

[10]Near the site of the modern Ramādī.

[11]The adherence to Shī‘īsm of the people on the Tigris south of Baghdād was noted by the geographers Yāqūt (A.D. 1179-1229) and al-Qazwīnī 1203-1283); and of the marshmen of the lower Euphrates by the traveler Ibn Baṭūṭah (1304-1377). See Shihāb-ud Dīn Abū ‘Abdallah Yāqūt, *Kitāb Mu‘jam al-Buldān* (“Dictionary of Countries”) (Leipzig, 1869), IV, 468; Zakariyyah b. Muḥammad b. Maḥmud al-Qazwīnī, *Athār-ul-Bilād wa Akhbār-ul-‘Ibād* (“The Monuments of Countries and the Annals of Men”) (Gottingen, 1847), Part I, pp. 303 and 310; and Ibn Baṭūṭah, *Tuḥfat-un-Nuḏhḏhar fī Gharā’ib-il-Amṣar*. . . (“The Gem of the Observers of the Marvels of Cities. . .”) (Cairo, 1884), p. 134. In the days of the Musha’sha‘ Sādah the whole south of what is presently Iraq was, except for the city of Baṣrah, predominantly Shī‘ī. See Von W. Caskel, “Ein Mahdi des 15. Jahrhunderts Saijid Muḥammad ibn Falaḥ und Seine Nachkommen,” *Islamica*, IV, Fasc. 1 (1929), 58.

[12]Wāsit lay near the site of the modern Ḥayy on the Tigris, which then flowed in its western bed, the present-day al-Gharrāf.

[13]Madā’in was to the southeast of Baghdād.

[14]Ibn Sanad, *Maṭali‘-us-Su’ūd*, p. 169.

[15]A man possessed of religious learning.

[16]“Ibrahīm Faṣīḥ ibn Ṣibghat-ul-Lah al-Ḥaidarī, *‘Unwān-ul-Majd fī Bayān Aḥwāl Baghdād, Baṣrah, wa Najd* (written in 1869) (“The Sign of Glory on the Elucidation of the Conditions of Baghdād, Baṣrah, and Najd”) (Baghdād, n.d.), p. 111.

[17]Carsten Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arabie et en d’autres pays circonvoisins* (Amsterdam, 1780), II, 180, 220, and 247.

[18]Our evidence for this is al-Muqaddasī’s assertion around 985 that, with few exceptions, the whole region of Aqūr (or Athūr), which embraced Mosul and much of the upper Euphrates and Tigris, belonged to the Sunnīs, Shams-ud-Dīn Abū ‘Abd-ul-Lah al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan-at-Taqāsīm fi Ma’rifat-il-Aqālīm* (“The Best Classification for the Understanding of Regions”) (Leiden, 1877), p. 142.

[19]See Sa‘īd ad-Daywachī, *Mawṣil fī-l-‘Ahd al-Atabegī* (“Mosul in the Time of the Atabegs”) (Baghdad, 1958), pp. 76-78.

[20]This path must have been introduced into Iraqi Kurdistan in the 12th or 13th century. This could be inferred from the fact that the tomb of

Shaikh ‘Abdul-Azīz (d. 1205/1206), a son of Shaikh ‘Abd-ul-Qādir, after whom the path is named, stands in Kurdish ‘Aqrah to the northeast of Mosul. Conversation with Yūsuf al-Gailānī, administrator of the Qādirī awqāf (religious endowment), Baghdād, 24 February 1971.

[21]Conversation with Bābā ‘Alī ash-Shaikh Maḥmūd al-Barzinjī, 24 February 1971; Ṣiddīq ad-Damlūjī, *Imārat Bahdinān* (“The Princedom of Bahdinān”) (Mosul, 1952), pp. 61 ff.; Muḥammad Amīn Zakī, *Tārīkh-us-Sulaimāniyyah wa Anḥa’ ihā* (“The History of Sulaimāniyyah and of its Districts”) (Baghdād, 1951), pp. 217-219 and 225; and C. J. Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs* (London, 1957), pp. 59 ff.

4 Some Religious-Class and Ethnic-Class Correlations

[1]This situation was noted in 1918 (see 1918 Administrative Report of the Baṣrah Division in *Reports of Administration for 1918 of Divisions and Districts of the Occupied Territories of Mesopotamia* [1919], I, 240) but would continue to be true in the next few decades.

[2]See Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia* (London, 1920), p. 27.

[3]Arab Bureau, Baṣrah Branch, (Confidential) *The Muntafiq* (1917), pp. 3-4; and Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Muntafiq Division for the Year 1919*, pp. 1-2.

[4]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities. Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain)* (1920), p. 45.

[5]Apart from the royal house, the more prominent families of Baghdād were the Gailānīs, Jamīls, Suwaidīs, Ḥaidarīs, Alūsīs, Sinawīs, Ṭabaqchalīs, Shāwīs, Shawwāfs, Dāūds, Zahāwīs, Rubai‘īs, Bābāns, Chādirchīs, Sulaimān Beks, Khuḍairīs, Pāchachīs, Daftarīs, Urfalīs, Kubbas, ‘Aṭṭārs, Ḥaidaiīs (other than the previously mentioned), Khāṣigīs, Jalāls, and Charchafchīs. All but the last six were Sunnī. The Khāliṣīs and aṣ-Ṣadrs, Shī‘ī ‘*ulamā’* families from Kādhimain, also occupied a position of prominence.

[6]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20013, E 6797/1419/93, Minute by J. G. Ward of 30 October 1936.

[7]See p. 68.

[8]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Arbīl Division for the Year 1919*, pp. 2-3.

[9]For this, see C. J. Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs* (London, 1957), p. 266.

[10]Great Britain, Administrative Report, Kirkūk District, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 430-431.

[11]I.e., chiefs.

[12]See, e.g., Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Arbīl Division for 1919*, p. 4.

[13]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Mosul Division for 1919*, p. 12.

[14]C. J. Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh* (London, 1836), I, 88.

[15]*Ibid*, p. 153.

[16]Conversation with Bāba ʻAlī ash-Shaikh Maḥmūd al-Barzinjī, 24 February 1971.

[17]One dūnum = 0.618 acre.

[18]I am not counting here Muḥān al-Khairallah, a Shīʻī Arab from the Muntafiq province and the shaikh of the Shuweilāt tribe, inasmuch as his title to the estates under his control had not yet been legally settled by 1958. I am also, of course, not taking into account the then virtually permanent (Shīʻī) leaseholders of large tracts of state land in ʻAmārah province. For the latter, consult Table 6-13.

[19]The author of this verse, which was quoted by Ibn Baṭūṭah in his *Tuḥlat-un-Nuḍhḍhār*, p. 165, was the Moslem judge Abū Muḥammad ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb b. ʻAlī b. Naṣr al-Mālikī al-Baghdādī.

5 The *Mallāks* or Landowners

[1]The source for the figures that follow is Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Taqyīm-un-Numuwwī-l-Iqtiṣādī fī-l-ʻIrāq 1950-1970* (Evaluation of the Economic Development of Iraq 1950-1970), mimeo. (Baghdad, n.d.), Part II, p. 26.

[2]For the more important leaseholders, turn to pp. 119 ff.

[3]The discussion of *waqf* land (land entailed to some pious purpose or for the benefit of private persons) is reserved for a later point.

[4]Iraqi Police File No. 244.

[5]For other differences between the two forms of tenure, see p. 109.

[6]In the tribal country, the inheritance custom differed somewhat from the officially recognized law in that it had less of a leveling effect. For example, on the death in 1952 of Shaʻlān as-Salmān aḍh-Ḍhāher, a chief of the Khazāʻil, one-third of his lands went, by family consensus, to his successor in the leadership of the tribe—ʻAlī ash-Shaʻlān, his third-born son—and the rest distributed to his other descendants in accordance with the law. Conversation with ʻAlī ash-Shaʻlān, February 1962.

[7]Conversation with a member of the Chalabī family, 3 March 1971.

[8]See Table 4-2.

[9]It should be noted, however, that Table 5-3 does not include the family of al-Khairallah, which provided the leadership of the Shuweilāt tribe, inasmuch as its title to its estates in the Muntafiq province had not yet been legally settled by 1958. Moreover, the table does not include the areas held in this province by the Saʻdūns for the same reason.

6 The Shaikhs, Aghas, and Peasants

[1]Tribal chiefs in Kurdistan carried either the title of “agha” or that of “beg.” For example, the chiefs of Pizhdar and Hamawand, two of the most powerful Kurdish tribes, bore the title of “agha,” whereas the members of the dominant family of the important Jaf tribe used the title of “beg.” It is necessary to add that the latter designation sometimes suggested that its bearer had a higher status or descended from an older and more distinguished family than that of an “agha.”

[2]The term “shaikhly” will be used in this chapter as an attributive word for both Arab and Kurdish tribal chiefs.

[3]The distribution is based, unless otherwise indicated, on Carsten Niebuhr, *La Description de l’Arabie* (Amsterdam, 1774), pp. 276-277 and 334-338; J. B. Louis Jacques Rousseau, *Description du Pachalik de*

Bagdad (Paris, 1809), pp. 113-114; S. H. Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq* (Oxford, 1925), *passim;* Ṣālih Ḥaidar, "Land Problems of Iraq," Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1942, pp. 70-72; and Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf* (1944), p. 261.

[4]Around 1800, the main middle Euphrates was the Ḥillah Shaṭṭ and not the Hindiyyah Shaṭṭ, as after 1880.

[5]Deputy governors.

[6]For a more precise delimitation of the boundaries of their principality, see C. J. Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs* (London, 1957), pp. 53-54.

[7]The Sorāns temporarily declined in the latter part of the 18th century, but recovered after 1810.

[8]Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs*, p. 9.

[9]Abbās al-'Azzāwī, *'Ashāir-ul-'Irāq* ("The Tribes of Iraq") (Baghdād, 1955), III, 211.

[10]For a more precise definition of their zone, see Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918 of Divisions and Districts of the Occupied Territories of Mesopotamia* (1919), I, 72.

[11]Great Britain, Arab Bureau, Baṣrah, *The Muntafiq* (1917), p. 1.

[12]Great Britain, Arab Bureau, Baghdād, *Arab Tribes of the Baghdād Wilāyat* (Calcutta, 1919), p. 263.

[13]*Ibid*., p. 58.

[14]*1bid*., p. 234.

[15]*Ibid*., p. 194.

[16]Arab Bureau, *The Muntafiq*, pp. 1-2.

[17]*Ibid*., p. 64.

[18]'Abbās al-'Azzāwī, *Tārīkh-ul-'Irāq Baina Iḥtilālain* ("The History of Iraq between Two Occupations"), V, 196.

[19]Niebuhr, *La Description de l'Arabie*, p. 338.

[20]Literally, crier.

[21]Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of Baghdād Wilāyat*, p. 194.

[22]C. J. Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh* (London, 1836), I, 101.

[23]Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs*, p. 52.

[24]Denis de Rivoyre, *Les Vrais Arabes et leur pays* (“The True Arabs and Their Country”) (Paris, 1884), p. 175.

[25]See, for example, Arab Bureau, *The Muntafiq*, p. 2, for their attitude toward sheepbreeders and cultivators, and Arab Bureau, *Tribes Round the Junction of the Euphrates and Tigris* (Calcutta, 1917), p. 3, for their attitude toward the Marshmen. See also Niebuhr, *Description de l’Arabie*, p. 334.

[26]Conversation with Yūsuf al-Gailānī, administrator of the Qādirī Awqāf of Baghdād, 24 February 1971.

[27]Arab Bureau, *The Muntafiq*, pp. 2-3; and Great Britain (Regime of Occupation), *Administration Report of the Muntafiq Division for the Year 1919*, p. 124. Excepted from the remark in the text would be the few Sa‘dūns who had been the beneficiaries of a high education in Isṭanbūl, such as ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa‘dūn, who later became prime minister of Iraq.

[28]Carsten Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arable et en d’autres pays circonvoisins* (Amsterdam, 1780), II, 201.

[29]Carsten Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arable et en d’autres pays circonvoisins* (Amsterdam, 1780), II, 201; and Niebuhr, *Description de l’Arabie*, pp. 335-336; Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of the Baghdād Wilāyat*, p. 194, and *Administration Report of the Mosul Division for 1919*, p. 9.

[30]Conversation with ‘Alī ash-Sha‘lān, shaikh of the Khazā’il, February 1962. According to the shaikh, his tribe controlled in the nineteenth century, among others, Āl ash-Shibl, who were cultivators, and Ghazālāt, Shabshah, and Khafājah, who were People of the Sheep.

[31]Niebuhr, *Description de l’Arabie*, pp. 328 and 334.

[32]Conversation, Shaikh ‘Alī ash-Sha‘lān; and Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of Baghdād Wilāyat*, p. 147.

[33]E.g., the Sarrāj, Banī Mālik, Sudān, and Sawā‘id.

[34]Great Britain, Arab Bureau, *Tribes of the Tigris. Al-Azairij, . . . Albū Muḥammad, etc*. (Calcutta, 1917), p. 9.

[35]*Ibid*.; and Arab Bureau, *The Muntafiq*, p. 2, and *Tribes Round the Junction of the Euphrates and Tigris*, p. 2.

[36]Conversation with Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān, son of the shaikh of al-‘Azzah tribe, February 1963.

[37]For an account of the history of Albū Muḥammad and other tribes of the ʻAmārah province, see the series of articles beginning with issue of 4 July 1934, of *Al-Ahālī* For the point made in the text, see *Al- Ahālī* of 8 July 1934.

[38]De Rivoyre, *Les Vrais Arabes*, p. 175.

[39]Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, I, 80, 88-89, and 152-153.

[40]Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq*, p. 80.

[41]Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, *I*, 157.

[42]Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs*, p. 217. It should be noted, however, that E. B. Soane attributed the descent of Aḥmad-ul-Faqīh to the Nurī-d-Dīnī Branch, to which the rank and file of Pizhdar belonged. See his *Through Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise* (London, 1912), p. 184.

[43]Soane, *Through Mesopotamia and Kurdistan;* and Muḥammad Amīh Zakī, *Tārīkh-us-Sulaimāniyyah* ("The History of Sulaimāniyyah") (translated from the Kurdish by al-Mulla Jamīl al-Mulla Aḥmad ar-Rūzbayānī) (Baghdad, 1951), pp. 58-59.

[44]Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, I, 153-154.

[45]Ṣiddiq ad-Damlūjī, *Imārat Bahdinān* ("The Principality of Bahdinān") (Mosul, 1952), p. 19.

[46]See, for example, Great Britain, *Administration Report of the ʻAmārah Division for 1920-21*, p. 4.

[47]The section was known as *firqah* or *fakhdh;* conversation with Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān, son of the shaikh of al-ʻAzzah, February 1963.

[48]Or, more properly, in the dialect of the Iraqi tribes, *muḍhīf.*

[49]In the *muḍīf* the shaikhs and elders of the tribe took counsel, received guests, and treated with tribal or governmental ambassadors.

[50]Ḥaidar, *Land Problems of Iraq*, pp. 85-89.

[51]De Rivoyre, *Les Vrais Arabes*, p. 174.

[52]An example would be Fāris Agha, chief of the tribe of Dizaʻi at the village of Kush Tepeh; see Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, II, 13-14.

[53]For details on the Turkish feudal system, which was in effect in the Mosul *iyālat* (administrative division)–then embracing the Kurdish zone–refer to H. A. R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London, 1950), I, Part I, 46 ff. and 258 ff.

[54]Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, I, 87.

[55]A *tghār* equalled two tons.

[56]Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, I, 96.

[57]See, e.g., Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Muntafiq Division for the Year 1919*, p. 109.

[58]A body of infantry which constituted the main part of the standing army of the Turkish Empire.

[59]The *wilāyah* was the largest Ottoman administrative unit.

[60]*Ru'asā'*, plural of ra'īs.

[61]Absolute private property.

[62]Mortmain or land entailed to some pious purpose or for the benefit of the descendants of its original owner.

[63]Arab Bureau, *The Muntafiq*, pp. 3-6.

[64]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Muntafiq Division for 1919*, pp. 123-124.

[65]Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of the Baghdād Wilāyat*, p. 147.

[66]For the *sādah*, see Chapter 7.

[67]Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of Baghdād Wilāyat*, p. 83.

[68]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 66.

[69]The *mīrī* share in this region amounted to 40 percent of the yearly produce.

[70]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 72-73.

[71]In consequence of the overthrow of Sultan 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd in 1909, all *saniyyah* lands were transferred to the state and became known as *mudawwarah*.

[72]Arab Bureau, *Tribes of the Tigris. Al-Azairij, . . . Albū Muḥammad, etc*., pp. 9-12.

[73]Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of the Baghdād Wilāyat*, pp. 58, 194-195, and 263.

[74]Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs*, p. 8.

[75]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 417-418; *Report of Administration of the Mosul Division for 1919*, pp. 21-22; and *Report of Administration of Arbīl Division for 1919*, pp. 15-16.

[76]Government officials.

[77]Great Britain, *Report of Administration of Arbīl Division for 1919*, p. 15.

[78]The town of ‘Amārah was founded in 1861.

[79]Great Britain, *Tribes Round the Junction of the Euphrates and Tigris*, pp. 1-3; *Administration Report of the Baghdād Wilāyat, 1917*, p. 26; and *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 320. For the data on which this paragraph is based I am also indebted to an unpublished scholarly manuscript prepared in the late forties for the benefit of the Communist cadre by a member of the ‘Amārah Branch of the Communist party of Iraq and entitled “Ma‘lūmāt ‘An Rīf-il-‘Amārah” (“Information on the Countryside of ‘Amārah”), pp. 6-7. The manuscript was seized by the royalist regime in Ba‘qūbah prison.

[80]The figures are based on a count of the tribes and sections listed in Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of the Baghdād Wilāyat*.

[81]Turn to Chapter 7.

[82]For the Naqshbandī and Qādirī mystic orders, see p. 43.

[83]See pp. 164-165; and Great Britain, Office of the Civil Commissioner, Baghdād, *Personalities in Kurdistan* (1919), pp. 4 and 42; and *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimāniyyah. 1922-1923*, pp. 12 and 57. The copy of the last-mentioned volume, which I perused at the library of Iraq’s Directorate of Security, was that of Major J. F. Wilkins, and contained handwritten additions, the latest dating to 1944.

[84]Great Britain, *Report of Administration of the Mosul Division for 1919*, pp. 13-14. This description of the agha of a *miskīn* village was not true only of the period of the British occupation. In the last decade of the monarchy, his authority was still feudal-like, and had indeed become intolerable on account of his now manifest economic irrelevance and the lapse of his assumed function as a protector by reason of the advance of security. See Fredrik Barth, *Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan* (Oslo, 1953), pp. 53 ff. and 57 ff.

[85]Great Britain, *Special Report. . . on the Progress of Iraq during the Period 1920-1931* (London, 1931), p. 237.

[86]Mayyāḥ and as-Sarrāi are sections of the Banī Rabī‘ah.

[87]Albū Sulṭān is a section of Zubaid.

[88]It should be kept in mind that, although the Jāf Begzādahs owned in 1958 a total of 539,333 dunums of land in various provinces, the biggest single landowner in the family, Ḥasan ‘Alī Maḥmūd aj-Jāf of Sulaimāniyyah, held only 56,764 dūnums. Data obtained from the Ministry of Agrarian Reform, February 1964.

[89]The irrigation of the Gharrāf area was ensured by the construction of the Kūt Barrage in 1937-1939, and that of the Ḥillah Shaṭṭ by the erection of the Hindiyyah Barrage in 1911-1913 and its modernization in 1921-1925.

[90]The attribute “smaller” is used here to refer to the smaller size of the estates of the shaikhs in question.

[91]Sir Arnold Wilson, *Loyalties. Mesopotamia, 1914-1917* (London, 1930), p. 311; and Great Britain, Cab. 24/111, Letter of 5 August 1920, from Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, to Foreign Office.

[92]Under the British the rent was at first 20 percent, and then was reduced to 15 percent of the produce; see Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Muntafiq Division for 1919*, p. 3. Later on the rate was decreased to 7.5 percent; see ‘Abdallah al-Fayyāḍ, *Mushkilat-ul-Arāḍī fī Liwā’-il-Muntafiq* (“The Land Problem in the Muntafiq Province”) (Baghdad, 1956), pp. 76-78.

[93]The shaikh in question was Farīq al-Muzhir al-Fir‘aun.

[94]Estates were called *muqāṭa‘ahs* only in Kūt, ‘Amārah, Muntafiq, and Ḥillah, but it was in these provinces that most of the largest estates were situated.

[95]For example, on the death in 1952 of Sha‘lān Salmān aḍh-Ḍhāher of al-Khazā‘il, the shaikhship passed by family consensus to his third-born son, ‘Alī ash-Sha‘lān: conversation with the latter, February 1962.

[96]The appellation of the guard differed from area to area. Thus it was also known as *fadawiyyah, rashshāgah,* and *zilim*.

[97]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the ‘Amārah Division for 1920-21*, p. 7.

[98]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Muntafiq ... for 1921*, p. 4.

[99]Great Britain, Secretary of the High Commissioner of Iraq, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 19 of 1* October 1922, para. 939.

[100]Conversation with ‘Alī ash-Sha‘lān, a shaikh of the Khazā‘il, February 1962.

[101]Conversation with Faiṣal Habīb al-Khaizarān of al-‘Azzah, February 1963.

[102]Great Britain, Arab Bureau, *Tribes of the Tigris. The Barī Rabī‘ah* (Calcutta, 1917), p. 1.

[103]Unpublished report by the *mutaṣarrif* of ‘Amārah (Sa‘d Ṣāleh), “Tarīqat-ul-‘Uqūd-il-Mubāshirah wa Ta’thī-ruha as-Sayyi’ ala Liwā’-il-‘Amārah”) (“The Method of Direct Leasing and Its Detrimental Effect on the Province of ‘Amārah”), dated 9 May 1944, p. 24. The pagination is that of a copy of this report in manuscript form in the library of the Directorate of Security, Baghdad.

[104]Conversation with ‘Alī ash-Sha’lān, February 1962.

[105]Governor.

[106]Unpublished report of 9 May 1944 by the *mutaṣarrif* of ‘Amārah, p. 24

[107]Unpublished manuscript, “Ma‘lūmāt ‘An Rīf-il-‘Amārah,” p. 12.

[108]Conversation with Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān, son of the shaikh of ‘Azzah, February 1963.

[109]Shākir M. Salīm, *Ech-Chibāyish: Dirāsah Anthrūpūlū-jiyyah li-Qaryah fī Ahwār-il-‘Irāq* (“Ech-Chibāyish: An Anthropological Study of a Marsh Village in Iraq”) (Baghdad, 1956), I, 154. It should be remembered, however, that Ech-Chibāyish was brought in the twenties under direct governmental control, and in this sense was not a typical tribal village.

[110]Conversation with Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān of al-‘Azzah, February 1963.

[111]Apparently from the Arabic *ghulām*.

[112]From the Arabic *zilim*.

[113]Conversations with Bābā ʻAlī ash-Shaikh Maḥmūd al-Barzinjī, February 1971, with Qīdār Shamdīh Agha, March 1971, and Nijyār Shamdīn Agha, March 1972; and Great Britain, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf*, pp. 341-344; W. R. Hay, *Two Years in Kurdistan. Experiences of a Political Officer 1918-1920* (London, 1921), pp. 46-49 and 52; Barth, *Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan*, pp. 42, 47, and 92; and Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs*, p. 146.

[114]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 134.

[115]Lady Bell, *The Letters of Gertrude Bell* (New York, 1928), II, 647.

[116]In ʻAmārah the *sirkāls* were usually the headmen of the tribal sections. They subleased the land from the shaikhs and rented it in turn to the peasants against a share of the produce.

[117]The *fallāḥ* is the peasant. Great Britain, *Administration Report of the ʻAmārah Division for 1920-21*, p. 25.

[118]Great Britain, *Administrative Report of the Baghdād Wilāyat, 1917*, p. 106.

[119]Great Britain, *Administration Report of Sulaimāniyyah Division for 1919*, p. 3.

[120]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 72.

[121]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Muntafiq Division for 1921*, pp. 2-4.

[122]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 134.

[123]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the ʻAmārah Division for 1920-21*, p. 25.

[124]Great Britain, Cab. 24/112, Secretary's Note of 9 October 1920 entitled "The Mesopotamian Mandate." The annual cost of the army of occupation prior to mid-1920 amounted to £24,000,000, and after that date was expected, on account of the need for reinforcements, to rise to £28,250,000; Great Britain, Cab. 24/110, Sir Percy Cox's Note of 24 July 1920 on the Mesopotamia-Persia Situation. The pressure for economy was one of the main causes for the summoning of the Colonial Cairo Conference of March 1921, where Faisal "won the ballot" as future king of Iraq. See Cox's statement in Lady Bell, *The Letters of Gertrude Bell*, II, 531-32.

[125]British forces in Iraq were reduced from 33 battalions, 6 cavalry regiments, 16 batteries, 6 sapper and miner companies, 4 armored car companies, and 4 R.A.F. squadrons in March 1921 to 3 battalions, 1 sapper and miner company, 3 armored car companies, and 8 R.A.F. squadrons in October 1926, and to 1½ armored car companies and 4 R.A.F. squadrons only in October 1929. Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Special Report by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. . . to the Council of the League of Nations on the Progress of Iraq during the Period 1920-1931*, pp. 47-48. The greater reliance on the R.A.F. in the twenties should be noted.

[126]For the texts of the treaties and agreements, see al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, I, 94-98 and 223-258, and II, 37-39. The more important provisions were as follows: Article 4 of the 1922 Treaty bound the king of Iraq to accept the "advice" of the British high commissioner in all important matters that affected British international and financial interests; Article 1 of the British Employees Agreement obligated Iraq to appoint British personnel in key positions of the state apparatus; accordingly, the posts of advisers to the Ministries of Interior, Finance, Justice, Defence, Works, and Communications as well as the posts of director general or inspector general of Irrigation, Works, Agriculture, Ṭāpu, Survey, Posts and Telegraphs, Police, Health, Education, and Customs were preserved for British officials; Article 2 of the Military Agreement provided for the continued presence of British troops and permitted them to levy local forces; and, finally, Article 7 of the same agreement stipulated that full consideration must be given to the desires of the high commissioner in matters relating to the operations and distribution of the Iraqi army and vested the British commander-in-chief in Iraq with the right of inspecting this army whenever he deemed it necessary.

[127]Lady Bell, *The Letters of Gertrude Bell*, II, 610.

[128]See pp. 25 ff., 99 ff., and 325 ff.

[129]See n. 126 above.

[130]The Iraqi army numbered 3,618 men in 1922 (Great Britain, [Secret] *Intelligence Report No 20 of 1922*, para. 987), 5,772 in 1924 (Great Britain [Secret] *Intelligence Report No 10 of 1924*, para. 378), 7,500 in

1925, and after that was kept at about the same level until 1933 (see p. 26). The army accounted in 1922, 1924, 1925, and 1927 for 17%, 23%, 26%, and 23% of the total national expenditure, respectively; Great Britain, *Report. . . on the Administration of Iraq for the Year 1928*, p. 98.

131The "Iraq Levies" remained stronger in number than the Iraqi army until 1925.

132Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 12* of 15 June 1922, para. 517.

133*Ibid*., para. 516.

134Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 9* of May 1922, para.

135One or the other treatment was meted out in various years to the shaikhs of the Madīnah tribes of Baṣrah region, the chiefs of the Ḥasan tribe of Sūq-ish-Shuyūkh, and Shaikhs Salīm and Ghadbān al-Khayyūn of Banī Asad, among others; Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Reports No 2, 3, and 6* of 15 January, 1 February, and 15 March 1922, respectively; Great Britain, *Report ...* on *the Administration of Iraq for 1925*, p. 34; and Al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, II, 161.

136Great Britain, *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimāniyyah. 1922-1923*, pp. 8 and 92.

137Great Britain, *Report. . . on the Administration of Iraq. April 1922-March 1923* (London, 1924), pp. 67-68.

138Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/12260 E 4529/86/65, "Memorandum of a Conversation [between King Faiṣal, the High Commissioner Sir Henry Dobbs, and Sir John Shuckburg of the Colonial Office] at the Hyde Park Hotel on the 28th October 1927."

139The officers broached the subject with Miss Bell as early as December 1920, *The Letters of Gertrude Bell*, II, 578.

140Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 6* of 20 March 1924, para. 178.

141See Letter No 2058 of 25 May 1927 from the Iraqi premier to the British high commissioner in al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, II, 92-94.

142Special Secret Report of 30 August 1928 in Iraqi Police (Major Wilkins') File entitled "Al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī" ("The National Party").

[143]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/63 E 862/6/93, Letter of 4 December 1928 from Sir Henry Dobbs, Baghdād, to Mr. Amery, London.

[144]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 19* of 15 September 1926, para. 578.

[145]For the text of the Regulation, see Great Britain, *Report. . . on the Administration of Iraq for 1925*, pp. 144-156.

[146]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 7 of 2* April 1925, para. 142.

[147]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/63 E 862/6/93, Letter from Sir Henry Dobbs, Baghdād, to Mr. Amery, London, dated 4 December 1928.

[148]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 7* of 2 April 1925, para. 143.

[149]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 145; and "Department of Education Annual Report for 1918," II, 5.

[150]Great Britain, *Report. . . on the Administration of Iraq. April 1923-December 1924*, p. 214.

[151]See Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 132 and 136; *Administrative Report of the Baghdād Wilāyah, 1917*, p. 106; *Report of Administration of the Kirkūk Division for 1919*, p. 3; and *Administration Report of Muntafiq for 1919*, p. 110 and *for 1921*, p. 2.

[152]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Sulaimāniyyah Division for 1919*, p. 3.

[153]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Ḥillah Division for 1919*, p. 2.

[154]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 8* of 15 April 1926, para. 232.

[155]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 383.

[156]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Muntafiq Division for 1921*, p. 7.

[157]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 383.

[158]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 119.

[159]*Ibid*., p. 70.

[160]The Chamber of Deputies.

[161]The deputy in question was ‘Abd-ul-Majīd ash-Shāwī of the ruling family of the ‘Ubaid tribe. There were in the Chamber two other deputies, ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin as-Sa’dūn and his brother ‘Abd-ul-Karīm, who came of the family of tribal *sādah* that dominated the Muntafiq confederation, but both had, by education in Isṭanbūl, become also wholly urbanized. For the list of Iraqi deputies to the *Majlis al-Mab‘ūthan*, see Faiḍī, *Fi Ghamrat-in-Niḍāl*, p. 140.

[162]This figure does not include the chiefs of tribes who were simultaneously *sādah* or leaders of mystic orders. For the list of the members of the Assembly, see Great Britain, *Intelligence Report No 7 of 3* April 1924, pp. 7-9.

[163]Guest-house.

[164]Great Britain, *Intelligence Report No 4* of 21 February 1924, para. 125.

[165]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 7* of 3 April 1924, para. 229.

[166]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 201.

[167]One dīnār equalled £1.

[168]Great Britain, *Report. . . on the Administration of Iraq, April 1923-December 1924*, p. 136.

[169]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 335.

[170]*Ibid*., p. 336.

[171]Great Britain, *Report. . . on the Administration of Iraq, April 1923-December 1924*, p. 139.

[172]*Ibid*., Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Revenue Department for 1924*, pp. 25-26; and (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 20* of 2 October 1924, para. 617.

[173]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 19 of* 15 September 1926, para. 578.

[174]Iraq, Ministry of Finance, *Annual Report on the Operations of the Revenue Department for the Financial Year 1928-1929* (Baghdad, 1929), pp. 30-31.

[175]Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 346-347.

[176]Iraq, *Annual Report on the Operations of the Revenue Department. . . for the Financial Year 1928-1929,* pp. 30-31.

[177]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 15* of 1 August 1922, para. 699.

[178]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 12* of 11 June 1925, para. 261.

[179]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 2* of 21 January 1926, para. 41; *No 7* of April 1926, para. 186; and *No 11* of 27 May 1926, para. 328.

[180]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 15* of 1 August 1922, para. 710; *No 16* of 15 August 1922, para. 808; and *No 21* of 1 November 1922, para. 1060.

[181]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 18* of 3 September 1925, para. 475.

[182]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 20* of 1 October 1925, para. 575; and *No 16* of 3 August 1926, para. 487-491.

[183]Lady Bell, *The Letters of Gertrude Bell*, II, 165.

[184]Governor.

[185]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 16* of 15 August 1922, para. 785.

[186]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 10* of 15 May 1922, para. 408.

[187]For example, he made a point of showing consideration to Nijris al-Qa‘ūd, who was the outspoken opponent of the pro-British Shaikh ‘Alī Sulaimān, chief of the Dulaim; Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 15* of 1 August 1922, para. 700.

[188]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 10* of 15 May 1922, para. 413.

[189]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 15* of 1 August 1922, para. 697.

[190]Dīwāniyyah’s British inspector of police, Report of 14 June 1927. Iraqi Police (Major Wilkins’) File No. 796, entitled “Jamīl al-Midfa‘ī,” has reference.

[191]For the rise in the strength of the army, see pp. 27 and 30. The air force increased from a few aircraft to three squadrons by the end of 1936 (S. H. Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950*, p. 246) and to seven squadrons, or a total of sixty-nine planes by May of 1941 (Maḥmūd ad-Durrah, *Al-Ḥarb al-'Irāqiyyah al-Briṭāniyyah, 1941*, p. 244).

[192]Faiṣal's confidential memorandum of March 1933, al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, III, 291.

[193]Unpublished Administrative Report of the Provinces of Dīwāniyyah and Karbalā' for the Period Ending August 31, 1930, p. 2

[194]For this decree, see al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, VIII, 331.

[195]Baghdād Security File entitled "Ḥizb al-Ittihād ad-Dustūrī" ("The Constitutional Union Party"). See also Table 10-1.

[196]Letter of 21 January 1947 from the Chief of Police of Dīwāniyyah to the Governor of Dīwāniyyah. Baghdād Security File entitled "Al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī ad-Dimoqrāṭī" ("The National Democratic Party"), Volume I, has reference.

[197]For an exposition of the Iraqi laws affecting land, see Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Center on Land Problems in the Near east, Ṣalāḥuddīn, Iraq, October 1955, *Country Information Report: Iraq No CI* 9, pp. 15 ff.

[198]But it should be noted that, by virtue of Income Tax Law No. 58 of 20 June 1956, income arising from the letting out of agricultural land became chargeable at a rate of 10 percent.

[199]Carl Iversen, *A Report on Monetary Policy in Iraq* (Copenhagen, 1954), p. 61.

[200]Carl Iversen, *A Report on Monetary Policy in Iraq* (Copenhagen, 1954), pp. 62-63.

[201]A. Critchley (a one-time professor at the Baghdād Medical School), "Observations on a Socio-Medical Survey in Iraq," *Journal of the Iraqi Medical Professions*, IV: 2 (June 1956), 70-78. The table is on p. 78.

[202]For these laws, their application, and clarifications of their content, see Kāmīl as-Sāmarrā'ī, *Qawānīn-ut-Taswiyah wa-1-Lazmah wa-l-'Uqr*. . . ("The Laws of Settlement, Lazmah, and 'Uqr and the Pertinent Regulations, Statements, and Instructions") (Baghdad, 1948); Directorate General of Land Settlement, *Dirāsāt 'an 'A'māl Taswiyat Ḥuqūq-il-*

Arāḍī fi-1-ʻIraq (“Studies on the Operations of the Settlement of Land Rights in Iraq”) (Baghdad, 1955); and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Center on Land Problems in the Near East, Ṣalāḥuddīn, Iraq, October 1955, *Round Table Report R-3* (a paper by Ṣāleḥ Ḥaidar entitled “Public Limitations on Privately Used Land”); and *Country Information Report: Iraq No CI* 9.

[203]*Ṭāpū* holders paid 1-2 percent of the value of the crops on pump-irrigated lands and 5-10 percent on flow-irrigated lands, depending on whether irrigation was irregular or perennial. In the case of the *lazmah* holders, the charges were 1-2 percent and 10-15 percent, respectively. Obviously, the pump owners enjoyed the most favored treatment.

[204]Food and Agriculture Organization, *Country Information Report: Iraq No CI* 9, pp. 16-18.

[205]See Table 5-1.

[206]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918,* I, 362.

[207]Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), quoted in a British official report in another connection, *ibid*,, I, 317.

[208]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Muntafiq Division for 1919,* p. 110.

[209]Letter No. 6 of 20 April 1949 from the district officer of Qalʻat Sikar to the sub-governor of Rifāʼī, ʻAbdullah al-Fayyād, *Mushkilat-ul-Arāḍī fī Liwa”-il-Muntafiq* (“The Land Problem in the Province of Muntafiq”) (Baghdad, 1956), p. 194.

[210]Letter No. S 522 of 12 December 1948 from the *mutaṣarrif* of Muntafiq to the minister of interior, *ibid*.

[211]This petition was placed among loose papers in a file containing miscellaneous items in the Baghdād Security Library.

[212]Ḥusainiyyah, Abū Zūfar, Abū Ḥimār, and al-Aḥdab, see Arab Bureau, *Tribes of the Tigris. Banī Rabī ah,* p. 14.

[213]For the areas of the estates in question, see *Al-Waqāiʻ-ul-ʻIrāqiyyah, Annex to No 1667* of 14 November 1938, after p. 4, *No 1675* of 26 December 1938, after p. 12, and *No 1698* of 15 May 1939, after p. 17.

[214]See Table 4-2.

[215]Arab Bureau, *Tribes of the Tigris. Banī Rabīʻah,* p. 17.

[216]See Table 5-3.

[217]Conversation with Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, leader of the National Democratic party, February 1964. Chadirchī knew about the past conditions of the Jaryāns by virtue of the fact that his father had much of his property in Ḥillah, their home province.

[218]See Table 5-3.

[219]For the support that ‘Addāi aj-Jaryān, paramount shaikh of Albū Sulṭān, lent to the mandatory scheme, see p. 90. For the vindication of his position by the English, see p. 94 . To exemplify the favoritism shown to his family, it may be mentioned that his brother was installed in 1922 in the Ḍhulaimiyyah estate on the Euphrates because he was “a staunch supporter of the Government of Occupation.” See Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 20* of 15 October 1922, para. 1000.

[220]See Table 5-3.

[221]Aṣ-Ṣabbagh, *Fursān-ul-‘Urūbah (fī-l-‘Irāq*, p. 167.

[222]See Table 5-3.

[223]Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān, son of the shaikh of al-‘Azzah, conversation, February 1963.

[224]Great Britain, *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimāniyyah, 1922-1923*, p. 13.

[225]See Table 5-3.

[226]£T denotes Turkish pound.

[227]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Arbīl Division for 1919, p*.5.

[228]Great Britain, Foreign Office, enclosure to letter of 29 January 1910 from Wilkie Young, vice consul at Mosul, to Sir G. Lowther, *Further Correspondence on Asiatic Turkey. April-June 1910*, pp. 23-24.

[229]Great Britain, Foreign Office, letter of 30 August, 1871 from Lieutenant Colonel Herbert, consul general, Baghdād, to Sir Henry Elliot, ambassador, Constantinople.

[230]Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Further Correspondence on Asiatic Turkey, April-June 1910*, p. 33.

[231]A Turkish silver coin equal to one-fifth of a Turkish pound.

[232]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Mosul Division for 1919*, pp. 10-11.

[233]See Table 5-3.

[234]Great Britain, Foreign Office, E 6356/204/93, Report of 14 October 1942 from Mr. Thompson to Mr. Eden.

[235]See Table 5-3.

[236]*Ibid*.

[237]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 11* of 29 May 1924, para. 365, emphasis added.

[238]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No* 9 of 1 May 1922, para. 263, emphasis added.

[239]Unit of capacity or a vessel of that capacity used for measuring grain.

[240]See Articles 14-16 of Law No. 28 of 1933 Governing the Rights and Duties of Cultivators, *Al-Waqāi‘ul-‘Irāqiyyah* No. 1267 of 1 July 1933.

[241]*Maḥāḍir Majlis-in-Nuwwāb Li Sanat 1933* (“Proceedings of the Chamber of Deputies for 1933”), Session of 27 May 1933.

[242]For the *Wathbah*, see Chapter 22.

[243]See pp. 174-175.

[244]Iraqi Police File No. 31 entitled “ ‘Abd-ul-Wāḥid al-Ḥājj Sikar,” entry by Major J. F. Wilkins, dated May 1920.

[245]*Ibid*., entries of June 1921, 17 September 1927, and 11 March 1928; and Al-Fir’aun (a shaikh of al-Fatlah), *Al-Ḥaqāiq-un-Nāṣi‘ah fī-th-Thawrat-il-‘Irāqiyyah*, I, 8.

[246]Iraqi Police File No. 31, entries dated February and April 1935; and Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/73 E 623/278/93 and E 2563/278/93, letter of 17 January 1935 from Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon, and letter of 11 April 1935 from Sir A. Clark Kerr to Sir John Simon.

[247]Iraqi Police File No. 31, entry dated February 1937.

[248]*Ibid*., entries of May 1937.

[249]Petition of 7 Shawwāl 1340 (1922) by the Shaikhs of al-Ḥumaid, Banī Rikāb, Khafājah, Banī Sa‘īd, and others. Iraqi Police File No. 1924, entitled “Movements of Separation of Baṣrah from Iraq,” has reference.

[250]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No* 9 of 1 May 1924, para. 302.

[251]For these popular upsurges, see Chapters 22 and 30.

[252]See Table 17-1.

[253]See pp. 49, 134 ff., 551 ff., 666 ff., and 804 ff.

[254]Great Britain, Arab Bureau, Baṣrah Branch, *Tribes of the Tigris, al-Azairij, . . . Albū Darrāj, Albū Muḥammad, etc*., p. 10.

[255]*Ibid*., and Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 315; Unpublished Report of the Administrative Inspector of ‘Amārah for the Month of August 1929; Unpublished Report of the Governor of ‘Amārah dated 9 May 1944 and entitled *Ṭarīqat-ul-‘Uqūd-il-Mubāshirah wa Ta’thīruha-s-Sayyi’ ‘ala Liwā’-il-‘Amārah* (“The Method of Direct Leasing and Its Detrimental Effect on the Province of ‘Amārah”); and Unpublished 1952 Report on ‘Amārah Landholdings, Baghdād Internal Security Library.

[256]The English divided the Shahālah partly in order to bring about a more appropriate balance of shaikhly power, partly because Muḥammad al-‘Araibī “had a bigger *muqāta‘ah* (estate) than he deserved,” and partly to reward Fāliḥ aṣ-Ṣaihūd, who “has always been helpful and loyal to the Government; but it was not certain that his loyalty would stand indefinitely the strain imposed on him by being confined to a small *muqāṭa‘ah* inadequate for his position and character”; Great Britain, *Report on Iraq Administration, April 1922-March 1923*, pp. 68-69.

[257]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the ‘Amārah Division (or the Year 1920-21*, pp. 1 and 25.

[258]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the ‘Amārah Division for the Year 1920-21*, p. 23.

[259]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Revenue Department for 1918*, p. 8.

[260]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 335-336; *Administration Report of the ‘Amārah Division for the Year 1920-21*, p. 26; *Report on Iraq Administration, April 1922-March 1923*, p. 70; and *Administration Report of the Revenue Department for 1924*, pp. 25-26.

[261]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 321.

[262]Great Britain, *Administration Report of. . . ʻAmārah. . . for . . . 1920-21*, p. 12.

[263]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Revenue Department for 1919*, p. 61.

[264]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the ʻAmārah Division for 1920-21*, p. 24.

[265]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Revenue Department for 1924*, pp. 25-26.

[266]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 19* of 15 September 1926, para. 578.

[267]This was a conservative estimate. In another rice-producing province, that of Dīwāniyyah, the average yield per dūnum was, in 1925, 550 kilos by the estimate of revenue officers, and 630 kilos by the estimate of an agricultural expert; see Aḥmad Fahmī, Director General of Accounts, *Taqrīr Ḥowla-l-ʻIrāq* ("A Report on Iraq") (Baghdad, 1926), p. 82.

[268]See Articles 3 and 4 of the law, *Al-Waqāiʻul-Irāqiyyah No 537* of 1 May 1927.

[269]See Article 3 of Law No. 11 of (13)February) 1926 for the Encouragement of Cultivators to Use Pumps.

[270]See pp. 105 ff.

[271]One Iraqi dīnār was equivalent to one pound sterling.

[272]See International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *The Economic Development of Iraq* (Baltimore, 1952), p. 176.

[273]This can be gathered from the comparison of data in Table 6-13 with information in Arab Bureau, *Tribes of the Tigris. Al-Azairij, etc*., pp. 1, 4, 10, 11, 19, and 24; *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 315-316; and *Administration Report of the ʻAmārah Division for 1920-21*, pp. 19-23.

[274]See pp. 664-665.

[275]For details concerning the ʻAmārah laws of 1952 and 1955, see Doreen Warriner, *Land Reform and Development in the Middle East* (London, 1957), pp. 152-154.

[276]According to official figures, published in the mid-fifties, there were in Iraq 49,170,729 dūnums of cultivable land, nearly half of which was

undeveloped. See Directorate General of Land Settlement, *Dirāsāt ‘An A‘māl Taswiyat Ḥuqūq-il-Arāḍī fī-l-‘Irāq* (“Studies on the Operations of the Settlement of Land Rights in Iraq”) (Baghdād, 1955), p. 34.

277See Iraq, Ministry of Interior, Directorate General of Census, *Al-Majmū‘ah al-Iḥṣā’iyyah Litasjīl ‘Ām 1957* (“The Statistical Compilation for the Census of 1957”) (Baghdad, 1961); *Liwā’ay Baghdād wa-r-Ramādī (“The* Provinces of Baghdād and Ramādī”), pp. 169-171; and *Liwā’-ul-Baṣrah* (“The Province of Baṣrah”), pp. 113-115.

278Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Special Report. . . on the Progress of Iraq during the Period 1920-1931*, p. 240.

279This figure was derived by subtracting 173,321—which is the number of persons who in 1947 lived in but had been born outside the province—from 378,996, which is the corresponding number for 1957. The 1947 figure was obtained in 1958 from Dr. Fūād Massa, director at the Directorate General of Census, Baghdād. For the 1957 figure, see p. 133.

280Iraq, Ministry of Economics, Principal Bureau of Statistics, *Report on the Housing Census of Iraq for 1956*, pp. 10 and 15.

281In the year in question there were, in addition to the *sarīfas*, 27,491 mud houses in Greater Baghdād, *ibid*., p. 9.

282Dr. A. Critchley, “Observations on a Socio-Medical Survey in Iraq,” *Journal of the Iraqi Medical Professions*, IV: 2 June 1956), 71-72 and Table 4 after p. 78.

283*Iraq Times* (Baghdad), February 20, 1958.

284Iraqi and foreign businessmen complained that the Iraqi laborer was inefficient, which is true in comparison with the better paid and better educated workers of other countries, but the effort the Iraqi laborer expended on his work was greater than the strength he gained from his thin and often polluted diet.

285*‘Ammī* literally means uncle, but is an expression often used by humble Iraqis when addressing others.

2861000 fils = 1 dīnār = £1.

287International Labour Office, (Confidential) *Report to the Government of Iraq on the Development of a Social Security System* (Geneva, 1954), pp. 12-13.

[288]For other causes, see pp. 470-473.

[289]See *Al-Ḥāris* (Baghdād) No. 38 of 28 December 1936, Article entitled “An-Nagshah in Sūq-ish-Shuyūkh . . . .”

[290]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 159.

[291]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Baṣrah Division for 1919*, p. 70.

[292]Internal document of the Communist party of Iraq, undated but written in 1947 and entitled “Report on the Peasants of Baṣrah by Comrade Ṣārim, Member of the Committee of the Baṣrah Region,” pp. 4-5.

[293]*Ibid*., p. 8; and *Al-Ḥāris* No, 38 of 28 December 1936.

[294]Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract 1963* (Baghdad, 1964), p. 125.

[295]An Arab long cotton shirt.

[296]Great Britain, Naval Intelligence Division, *Iraq and the Persian Gulf*, p. 338.

[297]Unpublished paper written in 1958 by Dr. Mahdī Murtaḍa and entitled “Health Conditions in Iraq.”

[298]*Mālech yā yummah al-yom jibtīnī liḍhḍhaim*

Wa-d-dunyah bas wayyāy tumṭor bilā ghaim.

The couplet was quoted in a Communist manuscript which was seized by the police in 1954 in Ba‘qūbah prison and was entitled “Information on the Countryside of ‘Amārah” (in Arabic).

[299]This is a sample from a number of songs that I collected in 1958 with the help of an ex-peasant of the Albū Muḥammad tribe of ‘Amārah who in the year referred to was 55 years of age and worked as a doorkeeper for a commercial company in Baghdād. The Arabic original reads as follows:

Ya rabbī hech wayyāy ma biha ma‘na
Yintafi‘bihi al-ghair mū ḥagg ta’abnā
Wa rid ashrid li Baghdād min hal ‘ashīrah
Lā Tujbir al-maksūr lā ‘idhā ghīrah
Wa rid ashrid li Baghdād min halfilaḥah
Lā tushbi‘ aj-jū‘ān lā bihā rāḥah

Wa ṣaffeg ar-rāḥ birāḥ rāh al-waqt rāḥ
Wa anā arkuḍ wa ta‘bān mā ḥaṣalt rāḥ.

300The *sharrāds* are primitive waterlifts worked by an animal which hauls up the *dalw*—a large skin bucket—by means of a rope running over a pulley.

301Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Mosul Division for 1919*, p. 21.

302Governor of ‘Amārah, unpublished report of 9 May 1944, pp. 8-9; and Communist manuscript, “Information on the Countryside of ‘Amārah,” p. 16.

303Governor of ‘Amārah, unpublished report of 9 May 1944, p. 18.

304Barth, *Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan*, p. 22.

305One *mann* equalled 25 kilograms in Shāmiyyah.

306One *kaila* equalled 3¾ kilograms in ‘Amārah.

307One *tghār* equalled 2,000 kilograms.

308Fahmī, *Taqrīr Ḥowla-l-‘Irāq*, pp. 79-80; and Communist manuscript, “information on the Countryside of ‘Amārah,” pp. 16-19

309Great Britain, *Administrative Report of the Baghdād Wilāyah for 1917*, p . 161;And Al-Ḥāris (Baghdad) No. 32 to 21 December 1936.

310Governor of ‘Amārah, unpublished report of 9 May 1944, p. 6; and Communist manuscript, “Information on the Countryside of ‘Amārah,” p. 13.

311I am indebted for this verse line to ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain ‘Abd-ul-Karīm, member in 1958 of the Iraqi Co-operative Association for the Employees and Labourers of Commercial Companies.

312For a fuller list of dues claimed by Kurdish chieftains, see Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs*, p. 224.

313Fahmī, *Taqrīr Ḥowla-l-‘Iraq*, pp. 87-88 and 101.

314Great Britain, *Special Report... on the Progress of Iraq during the Period 1920-1931*, p. 239.

315Governor of ‘Amārah, unpublished report of 9 May 1944, pp. 23-24.

316The comparable figure for 236 farm owners in the same area was 71.3 dīnārs, but these were often in fact farm owners who were at the

same time tenants on large holdings, their own acreage of land being too small and in part unsuitable for agriculture because of salination; A. P. G. Poyck, *Farm Studies in Iraq* (Wagenigen, Netherlands, 1962), pp. 57 and 63-64.

317Although the Ministry of Interior had in 1927 instructed the governors of provinces to see to it that the peasant-tribesmen, laboring on dikes, were paid, fed, and sheltered by the shaikhs benefiting from their work (see Great Britain, *Report. . . on the Administration of Iraq for 1927*, pp. 36-37), the practice of *al-ʻAunah* in this connection did not cease in the areas where the power of the shaikh was unchallengeable.

318Unpublished report for the year 1929 of the British administrative inspector of ʻAmārah province, dated 1 April 1930, pp. 21-22.

319Communist manuscript, "Information on the Countryside of ʻAmārah," p. 36.

320*Proceedings of the Twentieth Session of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Chamber of Deputies for 1937* (in Arabic), 31 May 1937, p. 264.

321The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *The Economic Development of Iraq*, p. 17.

322Muḥammad Salmān Ḥasan, *At-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī fī-l-ʻIrāq. At-Tijārat-ul-Khārijiyyah wa-t-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī 1864-1958* ("Economic Development of Iraq. Foreign Trade and Economic Development") (Saida, 1965), p. 181.

323Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 335.

324Unpublished monthly report of the British administrative inspector of ʻAmārah for March 1930, dated 20 April 1930, p. 5.

325Governor of ʻAmārah, unpublished report of 9 May 1944, pp. 7-9, 3, and 33.

326In 1951, the province's 177 landlords held 3,422,733 dūnums, of which 2,722,504 were cultivable, but only 553,686 were actually planted. A part of the rest was, however, lying fallow. Unpublished 1952 report on ʻAmīrah land-holdings, Baghdād Internal Security Library.

327Governor of ʻAmārah unpublished report of 9 May 1944, p. 6.

328Great Britain, *Administration Report of ʻAmārah Division for the Year 1920-21*, p. 25.

[329]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Revenue Department for 1924*, p. 26.

[330]Fahmī, *Taqrīr Ḥowla-l-‘Irāq*, pp. 105-106.

[331]For the *khums*, see p. 156.

[332]The *zakāt* is an alms tax.

[333]See ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq al-Hilālī, *Mashākil-ul-I’ timān-iz-Zirā‘ī fī-l-‘Irāq* (“Problems of Agricultural Credit in Iraq”) (Baghdad, 1957), p. 91.

[334]Unpublished monthly report for April 1930 of the ‘Amārah administrative inspector dated 30 May 1930, p. 16.

[335]Governor of ‘Amārah, unpublished report of 9 May 1944, p. 24.

[336]Conversation with Peter Vanderveen, a Dutch expert attached to the Ministry of Agriculture, November 1957.

[337]Iraq, Ministry of Economics, Principal Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract 1957* (Baghdād, 1958), p. 71.

[338]unpublished monthly report for March 1930 of British administrative inspector of ‘Amārah, dated 20 April 1930, pp. 4-5.

[339]*lbid*., p. 8.

[340]Unpublished report of the ‘Amārah administrative inspector for August 1929, dated 20 September 1929.

[341]Iraq, *Statistical Abstract 1957*, p. 71.

[342]Governor of ‘Amārah, unpublished report of 9 May 1944, p. 11.

[343]Unpublished report for the year 1929 of the British administrative inspector of ‘Amārah, dated 1 April 1930, p. 13.

7 The *Sādah*

[1]This appears to have been true, for example, in the case of the two most prominent *ashrāf* families of Baghdād, the Gailānīs (see note 3 below) and the Jamīls (conversation with Muḥammad Fakhrī aj-Jamīl, October 1971).

[2]Conversation, Yūsuf al-Gailānī, administrator of the Qādirī Awqāf of Baghdād, 24 February 1971.

[3]In his book, *Al-Ḥaqq-uḍh-Ḍhāher fī Sharḥ Ḥāl-ish-Shaikh ‘Abd-il-Qādir* (“The Manifest Truth in the Elucidation of the Status of Shaikh ‘Abd-il-Qādir”), ‘Alī al-Karmānī al-Hanafī (1641-1728), a legist from Qanawj, India, maintained that the shaikh to whom the Gailānī family owed its standing did not himself claim to be a *sayyid*, but that the claim was put forward by his descendants. See Muḥammad Amīn Zakī, *Tārīkh-us-Sulaimāniyyah*, p. 212.

[4]Carsten Niebuhr, *Description de l’Arabie* (Amsterdam, 1774), p. 12. Significantly, in 1899, the grand sharīf of Mecca, sensing perhaps that too wide a distribution of descent from the Prophet detracted from his own distinction, reportedly ordered the suppression of the title in the entire district over which he had authority; Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia, January-June 1899*, pp. 34-35.

[5]The official list was inserted in the *Sāl Nāmeh* (Yearbook) of the Baghdād Wilāyah for A.H. 1312 (A.D. 1894) and was published in *Revue du Monde Musul-man*, VI: 12 (December 1908), 651-652.

[6]For the claim of the Suwaidīs, see Ibn Sanad, *Maṭāli‘-us-Su‘ūd*, pp. 107-108.

[7]Strictly speaking, the title of *sayyid* or *sharīf* applied to descendants of Ḥusain and Ḥasan, grandsons of the Prophet, but the House of Muḥammad was historically more widely interpreted to include the descendants of ‘Abbās.

[8]For the claim of these two families, see Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Alūsī, *Al-Misk al-Aḍfar* (“The Best of Musks”) (Baghdad, 1930) I, 89-90; Ibrahīm ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn: Akhbāruhum wa Majālisuhum* (“The Baghdādis: Their Annals and Assemblies”) (Baghdad, 1958), p. 33; and Yūnis ash-Shaikh Ibrahīm as-Sāmarrā’i, *As-Sayyid Aḥmad ar-Rifā‘ī. Ḥayātuhu wa Athāruhu* (“As-Sayyid Aḥmad ar-Rifā’ī. His Life and Traditions”) (Baghdad, 1970), pp. 94-95.

[9]Why. in 1894, Muḥammad Āl-Jamīl had precedence over the Naqīb (consult Table 7-1), is not clear.

[10]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918 of Divisions and Districts of the Occupied Territories of Mesopotamia* (1919), I, 86.

[11]See the 36th article of a series on “The Tragedy of the Province of ‘Amārah,” *Al-Ahalī* (Baghdad), 24 August 1934.

[12]See Table 5-3 and Great Britain, Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of the Baghdād Wilāyah* (Calcutta, 1919), p. 185.

[13]Table 5-3; and conversation with Muḥammad Fakhrī aj-Jamīl, 14 October 1971.

[14]I.e., on the Ḥillah Branch of the Euphrates.

[15]See Table 5-3 and Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of the Baghdād Wilāyah*, p. 184.

[16]The *muftīs* are canon lawyers of standing.

[17]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, pp. 33-35.

[18]Arab Bureau, *Arab Tribes of the Baghdād Wilāyah*, p. 183.

[19]*Ibid*., p. 188.

[20]*Ibid*., p. 186.

[21]Sulaimān Sa’igh al-Mawṣilī, *Tārīkh-ul-Mawṣil* (“The History of Mosul”) (Cairo, 1923), I, 266-267; and Great Britain, *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimāniyyah* (1922), pp. 1, 2, 21, and 75.

[22]Religious endowment.

[23]Great Britain, *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain)* (1920), p. 93.

[24]*Ibid*., p. 25.

[25]Conversation with M. H. ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān, a lawyer of Baṣrah, May 1972.

[26]Shaikh ‘Abd-ul-Qāder Bāsha‘yān al-‘Abbāsī, *Al-Baṣrah fī Adwārihā-t-Tārīkhiyyah* (“Baṣrah in Its Historical Phases”) (Baghdad, 1961), p. 55.

[27]See Table 5-3.

[28]Great Britain, Arab Bureau, Baṣrah Branch, *The Muntafiq*, pp. 2-3; and Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia* (1920), p. 21.

[29]Conversation with Yūsuf al-Gailānī, 24 February 1971.

[30]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain* (1920), p. 26.

[31]Spiritual guide or grand master.

[32]Aḥmad-i Khānaqah's direct descendants owned 42,351 dūnums in 1958, see Table 5-3.

[33]For these *sādah*, see Table 5-3.

[34]The Abū Ṭabīkhs originally held land under the chief of the Khazā'il, but in the twentieth century were leaders of the tribe of Āl-Ziyād.

[35]See Table 7-4.

[36]This incident was reported by Anastās the Carmelite himself, and was recounted by Khairī Amīn al-'Umarī in his *Shakhṣiyyāt 'Irāqiyyah* ("Iraqi Personalities") (Baghdad, 1955), p. 12.

[37]I.e., more than a hundred houses.

[38]Conversations with Muḥammad ash-Shu'aybī of Baṣrah, November 1962; Tawfīq as-Suwaidī of Baghdād, March 1965; and M. H. 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān of Baṣrah, May 1972.

[39]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimāniyyah*, p. 98.

[40]Some Mosulites dispute the Jalīlīs' claim of kinship with Taghleb.

[41]Conversation with Nu'mān aj-Jalīlī of Mosul, February 1961.

[42]Gertrude Bell, *Amurath to Amurath* (London, 1911), p. 254. Although Bell, who visited Mosul in 1909, did not name the Jalīlīs in her book, it is obvious from the context and from our knowledge of the history of the family that she was referring to them.

[43]Conversation with Nu'mān aj-Jalīlīs, February 1961.

[44]For the *chalabīs*, who were merchants of high standing, turn to Chapter 9. For matrimonial alliances between these merchants and the *sādah* of Baghdād, see p. 224.

[45]The ma'dān are marshmen.

[46]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain)*, pp. 53-54.

[47]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, p. 26; and Ibrahīm Faṣīḥ ibn Ṣibghat-ul-Lah al-Ḥaidarī, *'Unwan-ul-Majd fī Bayān Aḥwāl Baghdād, Baṣrah, wa Najd* ("The Sign of Glory on the Elucidation of the Conditions of Baghdād, Baṣrah, and Najd") (Baghdad, n.d. [written in 1869]), pp. 86-87.

[48]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, p. 26.

[49]The Ṣafawīs ruled Persia between 1502 and 1736, and occupied parts of Iraq several times in the course of the sixteenth century.

[50]*Killidār* is the official title of the keeper of the shrine.

[51]See Great Britain (Confidential) *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain)*, entry under "Sayyid Muḥsin ibn Sayyid ʻAbbās," p. 85.

[52]Adminis trators.

[53]Police File No. 6 on Yūsuf b. Nuʻmān as-Suwaidī and conversation with Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, March 1965.

[54]*Sidānah* derives from *sādin*, which is the title of the keeper of the sanctuary. The *sādin* was at one point, about 100 years ago, the absolute ruler of Najaf. See Jaʻfar b. Shaikh Bāqer Āl-Maḥbūbah an-Najafī, *Madī an-Najāf wa Ḥāḍīruhah* ("The Past of Najaf and Its Present") (Sidon, 1934), I, 176.

[55]See *ibid*.,192-196, and particularly p. 194. In the second decade of this century, about £10,000 were received in Najaf annually simply for lighting the shrine, and the money was entrusted to the *sādin:* Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 86.

[56]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report* No. 24 of 27 November 1924, para. 732.

[57]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, p. 54.

[58]Ḥabīb K. Chīna, *La Province de Bagdad. Son passé, son present, son avenir* ("The Province of Baghdad. Its Past, Present, and Future") (Cairo, 1908), p. 173.

[59]See Table 5-3.

[60]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 109.

[61]*Ibid*,, p. 66.

[62]I.e., World War I.

[63]Great Britain, administration report of Ḥillah Division for the year 1918 in *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 121.

[64]See Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Muntafiq Division for 1919*, pp. 2-3 and 104.

[65]*Mallākiyyah* refers to the landlord's share of the produce, and under the British in this province and on this type of land *(ṭāpū)* equalled 15 percent.

[66]Great Britain, *Administration Reports for 1918*, I, 432.

[67]Letter of 10 March 1909, from Consul Crow, Baṣrah, to Sir G. Lowther, Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Further Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia, April-June 1909*, p. 16.

[68]Great Britain, Foreign Office, File 195/2338 of 1910, Gazeteer prepared by the Political Resident in Turkish Arabia, Appendix R, p. 24.

[69]The figure was obtained from the Ministry of Agrarian Reform of Iraq, February 1964.

[70]See Table 5-3.

[71]Great Britain, *Administration Report of Sulaimāniyyah for 1919*, p. 17.

[72]E. B. Soane, *Through Mesopotamia and Kurdistan in Disguise* (London, 1912), p. 189.

[73]C. J. Edmonds, *Kurds, Turks, and Arabs* (London, 1957), pp. 71-76.

[74]Bell, *Amurath to Amurath*, p. 250.

[75]See Table 5-3.

[76]British administrative inspector of Kūt, unpublished reports of Kūt Province for the months of January and February 1930, dated 11 February and 10 March 1930, pp. 2 and 7-8, respectively.

[77]For the Abū Ṭabīkhs, see Table 5-3.

[78]See ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt-il-ʻIrāqiyyah* ("History of the Iraqi Cabinets"), IV (Sidon, 1953), 280-282.

[79]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, unpublished manuscript, "Wujūh ʻAbra-t-Tārīkh" ("Figures through History") p. 47. As-Suwaidī kindly allowed this writer to peruse the manuscript in March 1965.

[80]See ʻAbbās al-ʻAzzāwī, *Tārīkh-ul-ʻIrāq Bain Iḥtilālain*, VII, 14-17.

[81]ʻAbbās al-ʻAzzāwī, *Dikra Abī-th-Thanā' al-Alūsī* ("The Remembrance of Abī-th-Thanā' al-Alūsī") (Baghdad, 1958), pp. 53-56.

[82]For this rising, see Great Britain, Foreign Office, File FO 195/949, Letter of 15 September 1869 from Consul General Herbert, Baghdād, to H. Elliot, Ambassador, Constantinople; Chīha, *La Province de Bagdad*, pp. 70-71; and al-‘Azzāwī, *Tārīkh-ul-‘Irāq*, VII, 200-202.

[83]Muḥammad Bahjat al-Atharī, *A‘lām-ul-‘Irāq* (“The Eminent Men of Iraq”) (Cairo, 1926), pp. 100-101.

[84]Letter from Colonel Ramsay, Baghdād, to Government of India, 19 October 1908, *Further Correspondence . . . Asiatic Turkey, October to December 1908*, pp. 101-102; Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, entry entitled “Committee of Union and Progress,” p. 22; and Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyun*, p. 150.

[85]For more precise details, see Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, pp. 93-94.

[86]Police Files No. 7 on “Sayyid Muḥammad b. Ḥasan aṣ-Ṣadr” and No. 277 on “Sayyid Muḥsin Abū Tabīkh”; and Shaikh Farīq al-Muzhir Āl-Fir‘aun, *Al-Ḥaqā’iq-un-Nāṣi‘ah. . . ,* I and II, *passim*.

[87]Maḥmūd Shukrī al-Alusī, *Al-Misk-ul-Aḍfar*, p. 90.

[88]Abū-th-Thanā’ al-Alūsī (a *sayyid* and *muftī* of Baghdād from 1833 to 1847), *Gharā’ib-ul-Ightirāb wa Nuzhat-ul-Albāb* (“The Oddities of Living Abroad and the Excursion of Reason”) (Baghdad, 1909), pp. 15-16.

[89]Abū-th-Thanā’ al-Alūsī, quoted in al-‘Azzawī, *Dikra Abī-th-Thanā’ al-Alusi*, p. 25.

[90]Carsten Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arable et en d’autres pays circonvoisins (Amsterdam, 1780) II, 176;* an-Najafī, *Māḍī an-Najaf wa Hāḍiruhā*, I, 206; and conversation with Yūsuf al-Gailānī, 24 February 1971.

[91]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, p. 282.

[92]Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arable*, II, 263.

[93]Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arable*, II, 176.

[94]For this, see Domenico Lanza, *Mosul in the 18th Century* (in Arabic), translated from the Italian by Raphael Bidāwid (Mosul, 1953), pp. 17-19. Lanza was a Dominican priest who lived in Mosul in the years 1754-1761 and 1764-1770.

[95]G. A. Olivier, *Voyage dans l'Empire Othoman, l'Egypte et la Perse* (Paris, 1807), IV, 278.

[96]al-'Azzāwī, *Tārīkh-ul-'lrāq*, VII, 50 and 273.

[97]*Ibid*., p. 31.

[98]Al-Alūsī, *Gharā'ib-ul-Ightirāb wa Nuzhat-ul-Albāb*, pp. 24-25.

[99]Al-Alūsī, *Gharā'ib-ul-Ightirāb wa Nuzhat-ul-Albab*, p. 127.

[100]al-'Azzāwī, *Tārīkh-ul-'Irāq*, VII, 119.

[101]'Abd-ul-Karīm al-'Allāf, *Baghdād-ul-Qadīmah* ("Old Baghdād") (Baghdad, 1960), p. 22.

[102]As-Suwaidī, "Wujūh 'Abra-t-Tārīkh," p. 14.

[103]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyun*, p. 283.

[104]There had been at one point before 1870 an advisory council at Baghdād, but it did no more than rubber stamp the *wālī's* decisions, and was allowed to become inactive; 'Abd-ul-'Azīz Sulaimān Nawwār, *Tārīkh-ul-'Irāq-il-Ḥadīth min Nihāyat Ḥukm Dāūd Pasha ila Nihāyat Ḥukm Midḥat Pasha* ("The Modern History of Iraq from the End of the Regime of Dāūd Pasha to the End of the Governorship of Midḥat Pasha"), (Cairo, 1968), p. 361.

[105]As-Suwaidī, "Wujūh 'Abra-t-Tārīkh," p. 14.

[106]Al-'Umarī, *Shakhṣiyyāt 'Irāqiyyah*, p. 24.

[107]See pp. 160-161.

[108]We read, for example, in a 1918 report by the British political officer of Shāmiyyah that in his district "the *muqāta'ahs* (estates) of Ja'ārah and Mishkāb were *saniyyah*, that is, *ṭāpū* of the Sultan. . . . They contain magnificent gardens and how the Sultan acquired them, as he certainly made no payment, when under Turkish law any tree planted, if not claimed by the state after three years, becomes the property of the planter, is not known." *Administration Reports for 1918*, I, 74.

[109]Provinces

[110]Great Britain, Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Mesopotamia* (London, 1920), p. 39. Vital Cuinet, in his *La Turquie d'Asie*, III (Paris, 1894), 44, also affirms that 30 percent of the cultivated lands in the Baghdād Wilāyah were "the direct property of the Imperial Civil List"

without indicating, however, whether they were all so converted by ʻAbd-ul-Hamīd himself.

[111]Aḥmad Fahmī, Director General of General Accounts in the twenties, *Taqrīr Ḥawla-l-ʻIrāq* ("A Report Concerning Iraq") (Baghdād, 1926), pp. 69-70.

[112]Taxation was, according to Article 20 of the 1908 Constitution, to be from then onward in proportion to the means of each individual. (For the text of the constitution, see *Al-Mashriq* (Beirut), 11th Year, No. 9, of September 1908, pp. 644-664). Later, a ruling passed by the revolutionaries placed all *awqāf* hitherto *mustathnah*, i.e., exempt from government control, on a par with the other *awqāf*. This applied to the Qadīrī *awqāf*, which the *naqīb* of Baghdād administered, but upon which, apparently on account of the outbreak of war, the ruling remained effectless. (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 24 of* 27 November 1924, para. 732 refers.

[113]Article 14 of the Program of the Committee of Union and Progress. For the text of the Program, see *Revue du Monde Musulman*, VI: 11 (November 1908), 514-516. When this article is placed side by side with Article 15 of the Program, which envisaged a cadastral survey, and with Article 21 of the 1908 Constitution, which guaranteed individual property but only if "held according to established rules," and when further it is remembered that in Iraq the "rights" of the landed proprietors were not only frequently dubious—many of the *ṭāpū* title deeds would not have withstood the scrutiny of any properly constituted court or land settlement commission—but held also with respect to less than one-fifth of the arable land, the remainder being legally state property—when all this is taken into account, it should be clear that the program of the Young Turks, if seriously meant and applicable in practice, portended for Iraq nothing less than an agrarian revolution. It is significant in this connection that the government at Isṭanbūl should have, in 1911, entertained—if our source, Sayyid Tālib an-Naqīb of Baṣrah, is truthful—the idea of converting even freehold "*mulk,*" i.e., absolute private property, into state land. For this latter point, see letter of 9 September 1911, from Acting Consul Matthews, Baṣrah, to Sir G. Lowther, Britain,

Further Correspondence. . . Asiatic Turkey, October to December 1911, p. 6.

[114]Baghdād's Committee of Union and Progress rejected the nomination of ʻĪsa Jamīl, a *sayyid*, as president of Baghdād's Municipality, called for the dismissal of Najm-id-Dīh Ḥaidarī, another *sayyid*, from his position as qādī ("religious" judge) of Baghdād, objected to the presence of the *naqīb* on the Administrative Council, and insisted that the members of parliament should be selected more for their abilities than for "their local influence or wealth." Letters from Major Ramsay, Baghdād, to the Government of India, dated 31 August, 7 September, and 19 October 1908; Great Britain, *Further Correspondence . . . Asiatic Turkey, October to December 1908*, pp. 50, 51, 53, and 102. After serious disturbances in Baghdād, the composition of the committee was apparently altered (see *ibid*., p. 107) but it had succeeded in alarming the *sādah* and other leading notables.

[115]It is worthy of note that while the Young Turks took the theoretical position that henceforth the basis of government was to be "respect for the will of the people" (Article 1 of the Program of the Committee of Union and Progress), the Mashwar party (for this party, see p. 166) demanded a return to the rule of the *sharīah*, the holy law of Islam. See Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyun*, p. 150.

[116]The more prominent of the *ashrāf* who became associated with the movement for autonomy at one point or another as leading members either of the Iraqi branches of *Al-Ḥurriyyah wa-l-I'tilāi* ("Freedom and Entente") party or of *Aj-Jam'iyyah al-Iṣlāḥiyyah* ("The Reform Association") or of other similarly oriented organizations, were Ṭālib an-Naqīb and ʻAbdallah Bāshaʻyān of Baṣrah, Yūsuf as-Suwaidī, Kāmīl aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī, and ʻAbd-ur-Raḥmān al-Ḥaidarī of Baghdād, and ʻAbd-ul-Ghanī an-Naqīb, Muḥammad al-Fakhrī, and Ḥabīb al-ʻUbaidī of Mosul. See Great Britain,(Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, p. 22; letter of 9 September 1911, from Acting Consul Matthews, Baṣrah, to Sir G. Lowther, *Further Correspondence . . . Asiatic Turkey, October-December 1911*, p. 6; and Sulaimān Faiḍī (an agent of Ṭālib an-Naqīb), *Fī Ghamrat-in-Niḍāl* ("In the Throes of the Struggle") (Baghdād, 1952), pp. 97 and 124.

[117]Another element, with different ideas and different motives, was also involved in the movement for Arab autonomy, an element which might broadly be termed as the new intelligentsia, and which consisted, for the most part, of young army officers from the lower middle class who organized themselves in the secret *al-‘Ahd* society, of which more will be said on other pages. But it cannot be overemphasized that in Iraq and at this historical point it was the landed *sādah* that played the first role in opposing the Young Turks.

[118]For Sayyid Ṭālib an-Naqīb, who was the real leading spirit behind the movement for autonomy, Arab autonomy did not, of course, mean national autonomy, that is, the autonomy of the Arab nation or the people of Iraq. Suffice it to say that in 1912-1913 all that Sayyid Ṭālib wanted was to make himself virtual ruler of the province of Baṣrah, and to found a Confederation of Arab Shaikhs and Amīrs, each one autocratic within his own frontiers and only nominally subject to the sultan; see Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain)*, p. 93. For details on Sayyid Ṭālib’s activities, see Faiḍī, *Fī Ghamrat-in-Niḍāl*, pp. 96 ff.

[119]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Baṣrah Division for 1919*, pp. 26 and 59.

[120]Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia, p*.142.

[121]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Mosul Division for 1920*, pp. 4-5.

[122]Memorandum, February 1919, by Gertrude Bell in Sir A. T. Wilson’s *Mesopotamia, 1917-1920: A Clash of Loyalties* (London, 1931), Appendix III, p. 337.

[123]The *Sharī‘ah* is the canon law of Islam.

[124]Suwaidī was arrested in 1913 by the Turks upon suspicion of complicity in the planning of the murder of General Maḥmūd Shawkat, Turkey’s grand wazīr (chief minister), and a leader of the April 1909 coup which deposed Sultan ‘Abd-ul-Hamīd. He was subsequently released for lack of evidence, only to be exiled in 1914 to Isṭanbūl, where he lived until 1919. Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tarīkh,” p. 9.

[125]Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman, a Shī‘ī merchant, and ‘Alī Āl-Bāzirgān, a Sunnī ex-Ottoman official, shared markedly with them in this work.

[126]Iraqi Police Files No. 7 on “Sayyid Muḥammad b. Ḥasan aṣ-Ṣadr” and No. 6 on “Yūsuf b. Nu‘mān as-Suwaidī.”

[127]It should be noted, however, that in 1743 a conciliatory congress of Shī‘ī and Sunnī men of religion was organized at Najaf by ‘Abdallah b. Ḥusain as-Suwaidī under the auspices of Nādir Shah of Persia, but the congress neither lead to anything like joint religious celebrations nor had any lasting effect.

[128]This division included the city of Najaf, the region of Abū Sukhair, and the district of Shāmiyyah proper.

[129]sharing with these *sādah* in the revolt—which was really a series of uncoordinated risings—were tribal shaikhs from the division just named, as well as from the districts of Rumaithan and Ba‘qūbah.

[130]Hādī Āl-Zuwain (who served as the connecting link between the leading insurrectionists at Baghdād, the tribal chiefs in Shāmiyyah, and the *‘ulamā’* of the Shī‘ī holy cities) had considerable influence at Ja‘ārah and Abū Sukhair, the Yāsirīs and ‘Alwān as-Sayyid ‘Abbās in the Mishkāb, al-Mguṭar at Shinā-fiyyah, and Abū Ṭabīkh in Ghammās, Great Britain, *Report of Administration, Baghdād Wilāyah, Shāmiyyah District, for 1917*, p. 142; and *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 94, 96, and 109-110; Al-Fir’aun, *Al-Ḥaqā’iq-un-Nāṣ‘iah Fī-th-Thawrat-il-‘Irāqiyyah*, I, *passim;* and ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *A th-Thawrat-ul-‘Irāqiyyat-ul-Kubra* (“The Great Iraqi Insurrection”) (Sidon, 1952), *passim*.

[131]Great Britain, “Annual Administration Report, Shāmiyyah Division, from 1st January to 31st December 1918,” *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 78.

[132]Great Britain, “Annual Administration Report, Shāmiyyah Division, from 1st January to 31st December 1918, ” *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 79.

[133]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh,” pp. 12 and 16.

[134]For this latter point, see Great Britain (Secret) *Intelligence Report (Iraq) No 22* of 15 November 1922, para. 1097.

[135]Entry dated 30 July 1927 in Iraqi Police File No. 1 on "Nājīb. Yūsuf as-Suwaidī," All the entries in this file were in Arabic translation. The pages containing the original English abstract of facts were, for some reason, removed.

[136]For biographical data on the *naqīb*, turn to Table 7-4.

[137]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kādhimain*, p. 54.

[138]For the text of his statement, see al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, I, 48-49.

[139]Abd-ul-Muhsin as-Sa'dūn, Minister of Interior, 6 November 1922, quoted in Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 22* of 15 November 1922, para. 1099.

[140]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 7* of 1 April 1922, para. 284.

[141]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 7 of 1* April 1922, para. 265.

[142]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 15* of 1 August 1922, para. 677.

[143]For the main provisions of the treaty, see Chapter 6, n. 126.

[144]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 13* of 1 July 1922, para. 567.

[145]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 18* of 15 September 1922, para. 879 and *Intelligence Report No 21* of 1 November 1922, para. 1048.

[146]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 16* of 15 August 1922, para. 760.

[147]Sir Percy Cox.

[148]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 16* of 15 August 1922, para. 760.

[149]A1-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī (The National Party) and Ḥizb an-Nahḍah (The Party of Awakening).

[150]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 17 of 1* September 1922, para. 835-836 and Iraqi Police File No. 239 on "Al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī" ("The National Party"), entry dated August 1922.

[151]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 18* of 15 September 1922, para. 879.

[152]*Ibid*.

[153]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 20* of 15 October 1922, p. 1.

[154]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 16* of 15 August 1922, para. 772; *Intelligence Report No 17* of 1 September 1922, para. 841; and *Intelligence Report No 21* of 1 November 1922, para. 1044.

[155]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 17* of 1 September 1922, para. 826.

[156]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 22* of 15 November 1922, para. 1097.

[157]He had been born in 1841.

[158]L. S. Amery in a memorandum dated 7 February 1929; Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/63 E 862/6/93.

[159]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 22* of 15 November 1922, para. 1101-1103; and *Intelligence Report No 23* of 1 December 1922, para. 11 Sell 57.

[160]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/63 E 862/6/93, letter from Sir H. Dobbs, high commissioner, to Mr. L. S. Amery, secretary of state for the colonies, dated 4 December 1928.

[161]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh,” p. 34.

[162]Consult Table 7-4.

[163]In 1925 the Progressives commanded the loyalty of 55 out of the 88 members of the House of Deputies, Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 15* of 23 July 1925, para. 340.

[164]In fact, however, many Muntafiq tribesmen hated the Sa‘dūns, their landlords.

[165]Letter of 21 August 1925 from British Special Service Officer, Baṣrah, to Inspector of Police, Baṣrah, in Iraqi Police File No. 1924, entitled “Movement of Separation of Baṣrah from Iraq.”

[166]In view of public denials by the English that oil had anything to do with their attitude over Mosul, it is necessary to quote here from *Intelligence Report No 5* of 5 March 1925. Paragraph 111 of the report

reads as follows: “The importance of granting the [oil] concession in the eyes of the [Mosul Frontier] Commission has been further emphasized by a direct question addressed by them to the High Commissioner as to the intentions of the Iraq Government, in view of the international interests involved. . . . Count Teleki. . . has asked the High Commissioner whether it would help if he [Count Teleki] were to explain to the Iraq ministers the importance of their granting the concession without delay. The High Commissioner has told him that he would welcome his cooperation . . . .”

[167]Yāsīn al-Hāshimī and Nājī as-Suwaidī. For these men, see Table 7-4.

[168]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 11* of 29 May 1924, para. 375.

[169]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh,” p. 38, and Khairī al-‘Umarī, *Ḥikāyāt Siyāsiyyah Min Tārīkh-il-‘Iraq-il-Ḥadīth* (“Political Tales from the Modern History of Iraq”) (Cairo, 1969), p. 207.

[170]Letter from J. F. Wilkins, C.I.D., to K. Cornwallis, adviser to the Ministry of the Interior, dated 6 March 1928, in J. F. Wilkins’ File entitled “Personal Letters.”

[171]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 13* of 1 July 1922, para. 567.

[172]Police File No. 52 on “Shaikh Mahdī al-Khāliṣī.”

[173]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 22* of 29 October 1925, para. 686.

[174]A1-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, II, 24-29. The king and ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin, it will be noted, acted together at this point, at least as far as could be judged from appearances.

[175]Consult Table 7-4 for Ja‘far’s term of office.

[176]Conversation of King Faiṣal with Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman, leader of the National party, on 16 July 1927; entry dated 23 July 1927 in Police File No. 94, entitled “Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman” refers. Although the British had asked for ‘Abd-ul-Muḥsin’s return as early as July 1927, he did not assume office until January 1928.

[177]Conversation of Faiṣal with Amīn ach-Charchafchī, leader of the “party of Awakening” (Ḥizb-un-Nahḍah), 2 March 1928, letter of 6 March 1928 from J. F. Wilkins, C.I.D., to K. Cornwallis.

[178]Conversation of Faiṣal with Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman, 24 December 1927, Iraqi Police File No. 94.

[179]Letter of 6 March 1928 from J. F. Wilkins, C.I.D., to K. Cornwallis.

[180]‘Abd-ul-Muhsin gave this explanation to Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, a close collaborator and a relation by marriage; Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh,” p. 36; and *Muthakkiratī (*” *My* Reminiscences”) (Beirut, 1969), p. 180.

[181]Al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, II, 188-202.

[182]Entry dated 9 February 1929 in Iraqi Police File No. 94 on “Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman.”

[183]For the text of the testament, see Al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, II, 258.

[184]Al-‘Umarī, *Ḥikāyāt Siyāsiyyah Min Tārīkh-il-‘Irāq-il-Ḥadīth*, p. 207.

[185]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 17 of 1* September 1922, para. 864.

[186]For aṣ-Ṣadr, see also Table 7-4.

[187]Iraqi Police File No. 7 on “Sayyid Muḥammad b. Ḥasan aṣ-Ṣadr.” The king and aṣ-Ṣadr worked together in the early twenties through aṣ-Ṣadr’s agent in the palace, Muḥammad Bāqir al-Ḥillī; Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 19* of 1 October 1922, para. 933.

[188]Great Britain, Foreign Office, File No. 335, “Report on the Leading Personalities in Iraq for the Year 1936,” pp. 12-13 (included in FO 371/20801 E 363/363/93).

[189]Two pro-treaty delegates had at one point been beaten in the streets by Baghdād crowds; Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 12* of 12 June 1924, para. 404.

[190]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Reports No 5* of 6 March 1924, para. 153, *No 7* of 3 April 1924, pp. 7-9, and *No 13* of 26 June 1924, para. 442; and Al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, I, 169.

[191]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Reports No 13* of 25 June 1925, Appendix I, and *No 2* of 21 January 1926, para. 48; and Al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, II, 40.

[192]See pp. 153, 158 ff., and 160 ff.

[193]Iraqi Police File No. 277 on “Sayyid Muḥsin Abū Ṭabīkh.”

[194]For these politicians, see Table 7-4.

[195]Thus in his report of 30 June 1926 to the adviser of the minister of interior, the administrative inspector of Dīwāniyyah wrote that “it should always be remembered that the bottom of all plots in the Shāmiyyah is the annual rice measurement,” File No. 277 on “Sayyid Muḥsin Abū Ṭabīkh.”

[196]Letter dated 26 June 1926 from the administrative inspector of Dīwāniyyah to the adviser of the minister of interior, File No. 277.

[197]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, *Muthakkirātī*, pp. 138 and 143.

[198]Consult Table 7-4.

[199]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, *Muthakkirātī*, p. 185.

[200]Khairī-al-‘Umarī, *Ḥikāyāt Siyāsiyyah*, pp. 223-224.

[201]Conversation with Dr. Ṭāreq Isma‘īl, a relative of Yāsīn al-Hāshimī, 29 July 1971.

[202]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tarīkh,” p. 41.

[203]Conversation with Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, February 1962; and Great Britain, *Report of Administration, Baghdād Wilāyah, Karbalā’ District, 1917*, p. 124.

[204]Great Britain, *Report of Administration, Baṣrah Division, 1919*, p. 13.

[205]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh,” pp. 46-47.

[206]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kādhimain* (1920), p. 72.

[207]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh,” p. 41.

[208]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kādhimain* (1920), p. 72.

[209]*Ibid.;* Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh,” p. 41; and Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20801/E 363/363/93, “Report on Leading Personalities in Iraq for 1936.”

[210]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kādhimain*, p. 72.

[211]Entry of 4 December 1924 in Iraqi Police File No. 462 on “Yāsīn al-Hāshimī.’

[212]For this line I am indebted to Kāmel ach-Chādirchī.

[213]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kādhimain*, p. 72; and Al-‘Umarī, *Shakhṣiyyāt ‘Irāqiyyah*, p. 106.

[214]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 6* of 15 March 1922, para. 243.

[215]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 10* of 15 May 1922, para. 406.

[216]*Ibid*.

[217]The king expressed this fear in 1924 when the question of Yāsīn’s taking of the portfolio of defence came up again; Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 16* of 7 August 1924, para. 542.

[218]Major J. F. Wilkins, whose official title was Deputy Inspector General of Police.

[219]J. F. Wilkins’ memorandum of 31 October 1923 in file entitled “Al-‘Ahd al-‘Irāqī” (The Iraqi Covenant); *Abstract of Intelligence of 1923*, para. 971 also refers.

[220]Entry of 28 October 1922 and 22 September 1923 in Police File No. 462 on “Yāsīn al-Hāshimī.”

[221]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 23* of 12 October 1925, para. 752.

[222]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 17* of 1 September 1922, para. 842.

[223]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 19 of 1* October 1922, para. 935.

[224]For Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman, see pp. 294 ff.

[225]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 19* of 1 October 1922, para. 935.

[226]Entry of 12 April 1924 in Iraqi Police File No. 462 on “Yāsīn al-Hāshimī.”

[227]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 11* of 29 May 1924 para 375.

[228]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 12* of 12 June 1924, para. 411 A.

[229]He had previously held the portfolio of communications and works and, from the British point of view, proved “unfailingly obstructive” in the Cabinet; Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20801/E 363/363/93, “Report on Leading Personalities in Iraq for 1936.”

[230]Yāsīn had been offered the premiership in May, but had declined it.

[231]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 10* of 14 May 1925, para. 209; and al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, I, 214.

[232]Ḥizb-ush-Sha‘b.

[233]I.e., “National Brotherhood.” Apart from Yāsīn, the Higher Committee of the Ikhā’ included in 1931 Rashīd AIī al-Gailānī, Muhsin Abū Tabīkh, ‘Abd-ul-Mahdī al-Yāsirī, and Ḥusain an-Naqīb—all landed *sādah*—as well as Shaikh Ridā ash-Shabībī, a Shī‘ī *‘ālim;* Ḥikmat Sulaimān, a landowner-politician; Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, a propertied lawyer-journalist; and the ex-Sharīfian officer ‘Alī Jawdat, who had been in the Cabinet but switched sides. Iraqi Police File No. J/173 on “Ḥizb al-Ikhā’ al-Watanī” (“The Party of National Brotherhood”).

[234]Al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh-uh-Wizārāt*, III, 133-143.

[235]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20801/E 363/363/93, “Report on Leading Personalities in Iraq for 1936.”

[236]Al-Hasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, III, 214.

[237]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/16903/E 1853/105/93, letter from Sir F. Humphrys, Baghdād, to Sir John Simon, London, March 25, 1933.

[238]Ṭāleb Mushtāq (ex-ambassador of Iraq to Ankara) *Awrāq Ayyārmī* (“Records of My Days”) (Beirut, 1968), p. 212.

[239]Yāsīn reportedly expressed this opinion in a conversation with Naṣrat al-Fārsī, a lawyer and, later, a minister of finance; entry of 25 June 1926 in Iraqi Police File No. 462 on “Yāsīn al-Hāshimī.”

[240]Letter from J. F. Wilkins to the counsellor to the high commissioner dated 13 August 1930, in J. F. Wilkins’ File entitled “Personal Letters.”

[241]The Ikhā’ government had wanted to hold new “elections” in order to produce an Ikhā’ Chamber, but was rebuffed by Ghāzī, who acted on the advice of ‘AIī Jawdat, chief of the Royal Dīwān. Jawdat had been a leader of the Ikhā’ but, taking umbrage at his noninclusion in the Cabinet, turned against the party. Al-Ḥāsariī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, III, 302.

[242]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/73/E 434/278/93, letter of 10 January 1935 from Sir F. Humphrys, Baghdād, to Sir John Simon, London.

[243]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/73/E 2291/3/93, letter of 27 March 1935 from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to Sir John Simon, London.

[244]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/73/E 7470/278/98, letter of 6 December 1935 from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to Sir Samuel Hoare, London.

[245]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/73/E 3731/278/93, letter of 30 May 1935 from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to Sir John Simon, London.

[246]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/73/E 5863/278/93, letter of 19 September 1935 from Mr. Bateman, Baghdād, to Sir Samuel Hoare, London.

[247]Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, *Muthakkirāt* ("The Memoirs of Taha al-Hāshimī 1919-1943") (Beirut, 1967), pp. 142-143.

[248]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/73/E 5863/278/93, letter of 19 September 1935 from Mr. Bateman, Baghdād, to Sir Samuel Hoare, London.

[249]Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, *Muthakkirāt*, p. 150.

[250]In this period his private letters were signed "Sayyid Yāsīn al-Hāshimī," conversation with Dr. Tāreq Isma'īl, a relative of Yāsīn, 29 July 1971.

[251]See Khairī al-'Umarī, *Shakhsiyyāt 'Irāqiyyah*, p. 116.

[252]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/74/E 6085/1419/93, letter of 17 September 1936 from Mr. Bateman, Baghdād, to Mr. Eden, London.

[253]For Hikmāt Sulaimān, consult Table 7-4.

[254]Great Britain, Foreign Office, letter of 17 September 1936 from Mr. Bateman.

[255]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20801/E 363/363/93, "Report on Leading Personalities in Iraq for 1936"; and Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, "Wujūh 'Abra-t-Tārīkh," p. 49.

[256]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20014/E 7624/1419/93, letter from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to G. W. Rendel, London, dated 21

November 1936.

[257]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20013/E 6784/1419/93, minutes of 29 October 1936 by J. G. Ward.

[258]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/74/E 4057/3089/93, letter of 19 June 1936 from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to Mr. Eden, London; and FO 371/20013/E 6819/1419/93, minutes of 2 November 1936 by J. G. Ward.

[259]Yāsīn's conversation with Charles Bateman in Beirut, Foreign Office, FO 371/20015/E 7917/1419/93, letter of 9 December 1936 from Sir A. Clark Kerr to G. W. Rendel.

[260]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20014/E 7145, letter of 2 November 1936 from Sir A. Clark Kerr to Anthony Eden.

[261]See also pp. 456-457.

[262]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/23200/E 938, letter of 25 January 1939 from Sir M. Peterson, Baghdād, to Viscount Halifax, London.

[263]Ibid.

[264]Staff Colonel Ṣalāh-ud-Dīn as-Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-'Urūbah Fī-l-'Irāq* ("The Knights of Arabism in Iraq") (Damascus, 1956), p. 14.

[265]Conversation with Rashīd 'ĀIī al-Gailānī, February 1964.

[266]Idem, and conversation with Yūsuf al-Gailānī, 24 February 1971.

[267]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20801/E 363/363/93 "Report on the Leading Personalities in Iraq (for the year 1936)."

[268]Premier Ḥikmat Sulaimān to British Ambassador, 19 November 1936; Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20014/E 7624/1419/93, letter of 21 November 1936 from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to G. W. Rendel, London.

[269]*Ibid*., and Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/75/E 368/363/93, letter of 5 January 1937 from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to Mr. Eden, London.

[270]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/74/E 5171/172/93, letter of 29 July 1936 from Mr. Bateman, Baghdād, to Mr. Eden, London.

[271]Letter of 5 January 1937 from Sir A. Clark Kerr to Mr. Eden.

[272]Entry of 4 December 1924 in Iraqi Police File No. 1747 on “Rashīd ‘ĀIī al-Gailānī.”

[273]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20801/E 363/363/93 “Report on the Leading Personalities in Iraq (for the Year 1936).”

[274]Great Britain, *Intelligence Report No 14* of 9 July 1925, para. 307; and *Intelligence Report No 15* of 23 July 1925, para. 336.

[275]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh,” p. 68.

[276]*Ibid*., pp. 68 and 71; al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, II, 55-56; entry dated 13 November 1926 in Iraqi Police File No. 1747 on “Rashīd ‘ĀIī al-Gailānī”; and Great Britain, *Intelligence Report No 23* of 9 November 1926, para. 688.

[277]Entry dated 24 December 1927 in Iraqi Police File No. 94 on “Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman.”

[278]Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, *Muthakkirāt*, p. 299.

[279]Ibid., pp. 334 and 336-337; and as-Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-‘Urūbah Fī-l-‘Irāq*, p. 131.

[280]As-Sabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-‘Urūbah Fī-l-‘Irāq*, p. 177; Taha al-Hāshimī, *Muthakkirāt*, pp. 360-361; al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, V, 145 ff.; Majīd Khad-dūrī, *Independent Iraq 1932-1958* (London, 1960), pp. 192 ff. and 197; and Lukasz Hirszowicz, *The Third Reich and the Arab East* (London, 1966), pp. 103ff., and 145.

[281]For these men, turn to Table 7-4.

[282]See pp. 274-275 and 282-283.

8 The Old “Aristocracy” of Officials

[1]The *wālī* was the governor general of the *wilāyah*, the largest administrative unit in the Ottoman Empire.

[2]The *mutaṣarrif* was the governor of a *liwā’* or sub-province.

[3]The *qāim-maqām* was a deputy governor or administrator of a *qaḍā’* or district.

[4]Conversation, Ibrahīm ‘Ākef al-Alūsī, 6 June 1972.

[5]Shaikh Yāsīn Khairullah al-‘Umarī (d. around 1824), *Ghāyat-ul-Marām fī Tārīkh Masḥāsin Baghdād Dār-is-Salām* (“The Heart’s Desire anent the History of the Beauties of Baghdād, the Abode of Peace”) (manuscript completed in 1805 and published in 1968, Baghdad), pp. 342-343; Maḥmud Shukrī al-Alūsī, *Al-Misk al-Adfar*, pp. 154-155; and Khairī Amīn al-‘Umarī, *Shakhsiyyāt ‘Irāqiy-yah*, p. 59. See also Table 7-4.

[6]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimaniyyah (1922-1923)*, p. 98.

[7]Ḥabīb K. Chīha, *La Province de Bagdad. Son passé, son présent, son avenir* (“The Province of Baghdad. Its Past, Present, and Future”) (Calio, 1908), p. 41.

[8]Ibrahīm ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn: Akhbāruhum wa Majālisuhum* (“The Baghdādis: Their Annals and Assemblies”) (Baghdad, 1958), pp. 119 ff.

[9]*Ibid*., pp. 134-135; ‘Abd-ul-Majīd Fahmī Ḥasan, Dalīl *Tarīkh Mashāhīr-il-Alwiyyah-il-‘Irāqiyyah—Kirkūk(“Histotical* Guide to the Celebrated Personalities of the Iraqi Provinces—Kirkuk”) (Baghdad, 1947), p. 301; Iraqi Police Files No. 436, entitled “Ra’ūf Chādirchī” and No. 438, entitled “Rif‘at Chādirchī”; and Gerald de Gaury, *Three Kings in Baghdād*, p. 78.

[10]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, pp. 106 ff.

[11]The local Ottoman professional army.

[12]The Urfalīs also engaged in trade; ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, pp. 74ff.; and Ibrahīm al-Ḥaidarī, *‘Unwan-ul-Majd*, pp. 96 and 98-99.

[13]Ḥasan, Dalīl *Tārīkh*, p. 284.

[14]Colonel S. B. Miles, *The Countries and Tribes of the Persian Gulf* (London, 1920), II, 563.

[15]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 4* of 18 February 1926, para. 110. The springs were appropriated by the government in 1926, only to be restored subsequently to the Naphṭajīs.

[16]Conversation, Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, March 1965; and ‘AIĪ ‘Alā’-ud-Dīn al-Alūsī, *Ad-Durr-ul-Muntathar fī Rijāl-il-Qarn-ith-Thānī ‘Ashar wa-th-Thālith ‘Ashar* (“The Strewn Pearls anent the Personalities of the

Twelfth and Thirteen Centuries of the Hijrah") (Baghdād, 1967), pp. 172-173.

[17]Conversation, Tawfīq as-Suwaidī; Sulaimān Fā'iq, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, (Baghdad, 1962), pp. 120-121; Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, *Min Awraq*, pp. 79-80.

[18]Muḥammad Fāḍil Pasha was the brother of Kistaman, who was the wife of Ghāzī Muḥammad, son of the famed Shamyl (Shamuel) (c. 1796-1871), the imām or spiritual and temporal prince of Daghestān; Lesley Blanch, *The Sabres of Paradise* (New York, 1960), pp. 446, 462, and 465-466; and 'Abd-ul-Karīm al-'Allāf, *Baghdād-ul-Qadīmah* ("Old Baghdād") (Baghdad, 1960), p. 70.

[19]Conversation, Samīr al-Fārsī, May 1972.

[20]Al-Ḥaidarī, *'Unwan-ul-Majd*, pp. 89-90.

[21]Consult Table 42-3.

[22]C. J. Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh* (London, 1836), I, 81.

[23]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kādhimain* (1920), p. 27. See also above, pp. 70 and 76.

[24]Conversation, Nu'mān aj-Jalīlī, February 1961; Muḥammad Amīn b. Khairallah al-Khatīb al-'Umarī, *Manhal-ul-Awliyā' wa Mashrab-ul-Asfiyā' min Sādat-il-Mawṣil-il-Ḥadbā'* ("The Source for the Holy Men and the Pure or the History of the Sādah of Mosul") (written in 1786, edited by Sa'īd ad-Daywachī) (Mosul, 1967), Part I, pp. 142 ff.; Domenico Lanza, *Mosul in the Eighteenth Century* (Arabic translation from the Italian) (Mosul, 1953), pp. 17-19; Carsten Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arahie et en d'autres pays circonvoisins* (Amsterdam, 1780), II, 293-294; and Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimaniyyah, 1922-1923*, pp. 80 and 93.

[25]Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, I, 373.

[26]Conversation, Samīr al-Fārsī, May 1972.

[27]Conversation, Muḥammad Fakhrī Jamīl, October 1971.

[28]Ibrahīm al-Ḥaidarī, *'Unwān-ul-Majd*, p. 89; conversations with Yūsuf al-Gailānī, February 1971; Muḥammad Fakhrī Jamīl, October 1971; and Kāmel Chādirchī, February 1962.

[29]Religiously, the principle is, of course, only applicable to the woman, but is meant to preclude a lowering in the social position of her family.

[30]Chādirchī, *Min Awrāq*, p. 42. Chādirchī adds, however, that his father, oftentimes mayor of Baghdād, did not use his influence on his behalf, but that the administrators of his school took good care of him in any case.

[31]Conversation, Kāmel Chādirchī, February 1962.

[32]Yāsīn Khaīrullah al-'Umarī, *Ghāyat-ul-Marām*, p. 322.

[33]William Heude, *A Voyage up the Persian Gulf* (London, 1819), p. 175.

[34]Fā'iq, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, pp. 62-63.

[35]Great Britain, Letter of 8 August 1870 from C. A. Rassam, vice-consul, Mosul, to Sir H. Elliot, ambassador, Constantinople.

[36]Great Britain, Letter of 3 February 1872 from C. A. Rassam, vice-consul, Mosul, to Sir Henry Elliot, ambassador, Constantinople.

[37]C.J. Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, II, 156; and Muṣṭafa Nūr-ud-Dīn al-Wā'iḍh (d. 1913), *Ar-Rawḍ-ul-Azhar fī Tarājim Al as-Sayyid Ja'far* ("The Blossoming Gardens or Biographies of the House of Sayyid Ja'far") (Mosul, 1948), p. 222.

[38]Ḥaqqī Bey Bābān Zādeh, *De Stamboul à Bagdad. Notes d'un homme d'État Turc* (Collection de la *Revue du Monde Musulman)* (Paris, 1911), p. 85.

[39]The Dā'irat-us-Saniyyah was, however, placed under the Ministry of Finance after the 1908 Revolution.

[40]The function of the gendarmerie was to keep "law and order."

[41]Great Britain, Admiralty War Staff, Intelligence Division, *A Handbook of Mesopotamia* (London, 1916), I, 102-104 and 109-110.

[42]Great Britain, (Gertrude Bell), *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia* (1920), p. 122. The total figure for personnel excludes the senior railway officials.

[43]For the Shawkats and Bābāns, turn to pp. 213 and 214. Nājī Shawkat and Jalāl Bābān, who were both sons of Ottoman district governors, had, after their capture by British troops, identified themselves with the Sharīfian cause.

[44]Al-Madrasat-ul-Ahliyyah.

[45]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kādhimain* (1920), p. 17.

[46]For the entire membership of the leading committee of Ḥaras-il-Istiqlāl, consult ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq al-Hasahī, *Ath-Thawrat-ul-‘Irāqiyyat-ul-Kubra* (“The Great Iraqi Insurrection.”) (Sidon, 1952), p. 51.

[47]Iraqi Police File No. 438 on “Rif‘at ach-Chādirchī.”

[48]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimāniyyah* (1922-1923), p. 21.

[49]For these premiers, see also Table 7-4.

[50]The preceding characterizations are based essentially on conversations with ex-Premier Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, Kāmel ach-CHādīrchī, and an ex-Iraqi senator who did not wish to be identified, as well as on Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh,” pp. 65-66, 79-80, and 95-96; and Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/20013/E 6784/1419/93 Minute of 29 October 1936 by J. G. Ward.

[51]For the areas in dūnums owned by the premiers named, see Table 10-3. For the other details, I am indebted to a well-informed Iraqi ex-deputy who wished to remain nameless.

9 The *Chalabīs* and the Jewish Merchants and Merchant-*Ṣarrāfs*

[1]Conversation, Yūsuf al-Gailānī, February 1971.

[2]Conversation, Dr. Ibrahīm ‘Ākef al-Alūsī, June 1972.

[3]These Haidarīs were Shī‘ī and had no relationship with the Sunnī family of the same name. The Kubbah were also Shī‘ī.

[4]Conversation, Jamīl Kubbah, March 1971.

[5]Carsten Niebuhr, *La Description de l‘Arabie* (Amsterdam, 1774), p. 14.

[6]C. J. Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan and on the Site of Ancient Nineveh* (London, 1836), I, 95.

[7]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Mosul Division for 1919*, p. 7.

[8]See pp. 158-159.

[9]Conversation with a member of the Baṣrite Shu‘aybī family, November 1962.

[10]For example, in his *Essai sur l’histoire des Israélites de l’Empire Ottoman* (Paris, 1897), p. 134, M. Franco refers to a certain Chalabi-Behor, a Jewish tax-farmer general of Sultan Maḥmūd (1808-1839).

[11]“Memorandum Respecting Foreign Capital in Mesopotamia,” dated 31 August 1909 and annexed to letter of 1 September 1909, from Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay, Baghdād, to Sir G. Lowther, Constantinople; Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Further Correspondence Respecting the Affaīrs of Asiatic Turkey and Arabia*[cited hereafter as *Further Correspondence] October-December 1909*, p. 25.

[12]Conversation with ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd Dāmirchī, January 1973.

[13]Ottoman Internal Rule of 29 November 1882, George Young, *Corps de droit Ottoman* (Oxford, 1906), IV, 55 ff.

[14]Yūsuf Rizqullah Ghanīmah, *Tijārat-ul-‘Iraq Qadīman wa Hadīthan* (“The Commerce of Iraq in Olden and Recent Times”) (Baghdad, 1922), p. 153.

[15]For example, within the Muntafiq Confederation the Ḥasawiyyah tribe consisted of cultivators (see Great Britain, Arab Bureau, Baṣrah Branch (Confidential) *The Muntafiq* (1917), p. 43), al-Juwaibir were fishermen and rice-growers *(ibid*., p. 59), al-Mushā‘ilah were sheep breeders *(ibid*., p. 66), Banī Saī‘d worked as shopkeepers, and had about 1,000 shops *(ibid*., p. 75), al-Ḥusainmāt were weavers *(ibid*., p. 106), and al-Nuwāshī al-ma‘dān were boat-owners and river carriers *(ibid*., p. 68). In the period under reference, a military and commercial tribe by the name of ‘Ugail had the exclusive privilege of forming and conducting caravans across the desert to Syria. The principal seat of this tribe was in Zubair near Baṣrah, but its members were dispersed and lived on the outskirts of Baghdād, Damascus, Aleppo, and other towns, J. B. Louis Jacques Rousseau, *Voyage de Bagdad à Alep (1808)* (Paris, 1899), p. 4. Rousseau, a relative of the famous writer, and the French consul in Baṣrah and Baghdād from 1772 to 1776, from 1782 to 1791, and in 1803, gave the name of the tribe as “Ergueils” but was obviously referring to the ‘Ugail.

[16]Habīb K. Chīha, *La Province de Bagdad. Son passé, son present, son avenir* (Cairo, 1908), p. 201.

[17]Mention of this rank was made by Abū-th-Thanā' al-Alūsī, muftī of Baghdād from 1833 to 1847, in his *Maqāmāt*, p. 27. See al-'Azzāwī, *Dikra Abī-th-Thanā' al-Alūsī* ("The Remembrance of Abī-th-Thanā' al-Alūsī") (Baghdad, 1958), pp. 23-24.

[18]G. A. Olivier, *Voyage dans l'Empire Othoman, l'Egypte et la Perse* (Paris, 1807), VI, 329.

[19]Pedro Texeira, *Travels of Pedro Texeira*, tr. W.F.Sinclair, (London, 1902), p. 73; and Dr. Leonard Rauwolff, *Travels into the Eastern Countries*, tr. Nicholas Staphorst and included in *A Collection of Curious Travels and Voyages* by John Hays (London, 1738), II, 146.

[20]Chiha, *La Province de Bagdad*, p. 200.

[21]Olivier, *Voyage*, VI, 329 ff.; and Carsten Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arabie et en d'autres pays circonvoisins* (Amsterdam, 1780), II, 195.

[22]Rousseau, *Voyage de Bagdad à Alep*, pp. 42-44.

[23]*Ibid*., p. 44.

[24]The *khans* of the nineteenth century (see J. R. Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs*[London, 1840], I, 141) did not differ much from those described by Texeira two hundred years earlier (see his *Travels*, p. 46).

[25]Rousseau's voyage lasted 62 days.

[26]Chīha, *La Province de Bagdad*, p. 202.

[27]See Robert Mignan, *Travels in Chaldea*, (London, 1829), p. 55.

[28]All the boats mentioned in the text are referred to by the various travelers of the time. They are also briefly described in Great Britain, Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Mesopotamia* (1920), pp. 48 ff.

[29]Mignan, *Travels in Chaldea*, p. 19. The *baghalahs* could sometimes carry a cargo of 200 to 300 tons. See Great Britain, Admiralty War Staff, Intelligence Division, *A Handbook of Mesopotamia*, III (1917), 388.

[30]Olivier, *Voyage*, IV, 432.

[31]J.S.Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia* (London, 1827), p. 386.

[32]OUvier, *Voyage*, IV, 282; and Mignan, *Travels in Chaldea*, p. 243.

[33]Tribal domains.

[34]Rousseau, in his *Voyage de Bagdad à Alep*, p. 123, refers to the toll as *"khoué."* In British records it appears as *"khāwah."* See, for example, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 21* of 1 November 1922, para. 1060.

[35]Rousseau, *Voyage de Bagdad à Alep*, p. 123, n. 1. Each payment consisted of three-fourths of a piastre per load. In addition, gifts in tobacco, cloth, and coffee had to be made to the tribal chiefs. The Turkish piastre was worth then about 2s. 3d. See William Milburn (of the East India Company), *Oriental Commerce* (London, 1813), I, 121 and 124 (1 piastre = 6 "mamoodies" = 9/10th of a sicca rupee = 2s. 3d.).

[36]For the term *tisyār*, see Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 69.

[37]For tolls on foreign merchants, see pp. 237 ff.

[38]One piastre = 2s. 3d.

[39]OUvier, *Voyage*, IV, 432-433; and Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, I, 127.

[40]See *Dalīl-ul-Mamlakat-il-'Irāqiyyah* ("Directory of the Iraqi Kingdom") *for 1935-1936*, pp. 233 and 237-238.

[41]See Table 9-2.

[42]Buckingham, *Travels in Mesopotamia*, p. 291.

[43]M *** (J.B.L.J. Rousseau), *Description du Pachalik de Bagdad* (Paris, 1809), pp. 9-10.

[44]See p. 240.

[45]Rousseau, *Voyage de Bagdad à Alep*, p. 86.

[46]Clement Huart, *Histoire de Bagdad dans les temps modemes* (Paris, 1901), p. 175.

[47]Rousseau, *Description*, p. 117.

[48]For this strife, see William Heude, *A Voyage up the Persian Gulf* (London, 1819), pp. 151 ff.

[49]For other causes, see Rousseau, *Description*, p. 118.

[50]Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs, I*, 251.

[51]Heude, *A Voyage up the Persian Gulf*, p. 187.

[52]Cited in David Macpherson, *Annals of Commerce* (London, 1805), I, 490-491.

[53]Rauwolff, *Travels*, in John Hays, *A Collection of Curious Voyages and Travels*, II, 145-146.

[54]Pedro Texeira, *Travels*, p. 67.

[55]Cited in Macpherson, *Annals of Commerce*, II, 299.

[56]Rousseau, *Description*, p. 12.

[57]*Ibid*., p. 10.

[58]We read in the 1905 edition of the *Jewish Encyclopedia* (II, 437) that the Jews of Baghdād were divided in the first half of the nineteenth century into "Persian and Arabian."

[59]See pp. 261-262.

[60]Trade was carried also with Bengal, but the relevant figures, which show the same tendency, are blended with those of the trade between Bengal and the Red Sea ports. For the combined figures, see Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, II, 143.

[61]For similar developments in other Arab countries, see H. A. R. Gibb and Harold Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, I, Part I, 307-308.

[62]See n. 35 above.

[63]Grattan Geary, *Through Asiatic Turkey* (London, 1878), I, 338, Of course, for this great decrease in the value of the piastre there were additional causative factors.

[64]Sulaimān Fā'iq, *Tārīkh Baghdād* (Baghdād, 1962), p. 175.

[65]Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs*, I, 283; and Anthony N. Groves, *Journal of a Residence at Baghdād during the years 1830 and 1831* (London, 1832), pp. 111-114.

[66]Groves, *Journal of a Residence at Baghdād*, pp. 176 and 236; and Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs*, I, 289.

[67]Groves, *Journal of a Residence at Baghdād*, p. 125.

[68]Groves, *Journal of a Residence at Baghdād*, pp. 114, 135, and 236.

[69]Stephen H. Longrigg, *Four Centuries of Modern Iraq* (Oxford, 1925), p. 267.

[70]Milburn, *Oriental Commerce*, I, 120.

[71]G. M. Trevelyan, *English Social History. A Survey of Six Centuries. Chaucer to Queen Victoria* (London, 1955), p. 215.

[72]C.H. Philips, *The East India Company, 1784-1834*, (Manchester, 1940), p. 299.

[73]Letter of 16 October 1907 from Acting Consul General Ramsay, Baghdād, to Sir N. O'Conor, *Further Correspondence, July-December 1907*, p. 200.

[74]Letter of 7 August 1909 from Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay, Baghdād, to the Government of India, *ibid., July-September 1909*, p. 108.

[75]The asper equalled one-eightieth of a German thaler or dollar. Article 68 of the Treaty of 1675 refers.

[76]Articles 1, 13, 30, 34, and 67. For the text of the treaty, see Lewis Herts let, *A Complete Collection of the Treaties and Conventions . . . at Present Subsisting between Great Britain and Foreign Powers*, II (London, 1840), 346 ff.

[77]See Olivier, *Voyage*, IV, 432-433.

[78]See p. 230.

[79]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 195/113, letter of 25 October 1833 from R. Taylor, political agent Turkish Arabia to Lord Ponsonby, ambassador at Constantinople.

[80]Groves, *Journal of a Residence at Baghdād*, p. 60.

[81]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 195/113, letter of 23 August 1833 from R. Taylor to Lord Ponsonby.

[82]Article IV and Additional Article 1. For the text of the Convention, see Lewis Herts let, *Collection of the Treaties and Conventions*, V (London, 1840), 506 ff.

[83]Articles I and II of the treaty.

[84]Letter of 7 February 1910 from Mr. Cree of the British firm of Blockey, Cree, and Co. to the editor of *Truth; Further Correspondence, January-March 1910*, p. 160.

[85]Letter of Mr. Sassoon, deputy for Baghdād, published in *Ṭanīn* of 31 May 1909, *ibid., July-September 1909*, p. 194.

[86]Letter of 21 February 1910 from Consul General Lorimer, Baghdād, to Sir G. Lowther, *ibid., January-March 1910*, p. 158.

[87]Mr. Cree's letter of 7 February 1910, *ibid*., p. 160.

[88]*Ibid*., p. 161.

[89]It should be noted, however, that the basis of valuation of cotton imports was altered in 1908, 30 percent being added to the import price; Great Britain, *Mesopotamia*, p. 113. For the figures in the text, see *ibid*,, p. 131, and Muḥammad Salmān Ḥasan, *At-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtisādī fī-l-'Irāq. At-Tijārat-ul-Khārijiyyah wa-t-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī, 1864-1958* ("Economic Development in Iraq. Foreign Trade and Economic Development, 1864-1958") (Sidon, 1965), p. 539.

[90]1866 Trade Report of the British Consulate, Baghdād, p. 278, cited by Ḥasan, *At-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī*, p. 281.

[91]Geary, *Through Asiatic Turkey*, I, 241.

[92]Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Special Report. . . on the Progress of Iraq during the Period 1920-1931* (1931), p. 246. By 1931, hand looms had also to cope with the competition of a newly founded Iraqi-owned modern spinning factory.

[93]Chiha, *La Province de Bagdad*, pp. 126-127.

[94]Geary, *Through Asiatic Turkey*, I, 164. The decline in the Persian transit trade appears, however, to have been temporary, as in the years before World War I it was still of considerable value.

[95]Geary, *Through Asiatic Turkey*, I, 115.

[96]See Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, III (Paris, 1894), 41.

[97]For the text of the law, see J. Lewis Farley, *Egypt, Cyprus, and Asiatic Turkey* (London, 1878), Appendix III. The law excluded the province of Hijaz from its provisions.

[98]Geary, *Through Asiatic Turkey*, I, 89.

[99]One Turkish pound equaled 100 piastres, and 112.5 piastres exchanged for one pound sterling in Iraq's money market. See Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, III, 113.

[100]*Ibid*., p. 20.

[101]One rupee equaled 7.75 piastres.

[102]Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, III, 234 and 236.

[103]Great Britain, *Report on the Ṭāpū Department (in Baṣrah Wilāyah for 1919*, p. 6.

[104]Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, III, 251-252; Hasan, *At-Tatawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī*, p. 506; and Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Mesopotamia*, p. 130. The fall in the export of grain in 1913 may have been due to the dislocation occasioned by the Balkan wars. See *Mesopotamia*, p. 106. The figures given, particularly for the earlier years, may not have been strictly accurate, but they are useful insofar as they indicate the general trend.

[105]Articles IV and V of the treaty, Hertslet, *Collection of the Treaties and Conventions*, XI (London, 1864), 561 ff. See also Ṣāliḥ Ḥaidar, "Land Problems of Iraq," pp. 243-246.

[106]Ḥaidar, "Land Problems of Iraq," p. 478.

[107]Geary, *Through Asiatic Turkey*, I, 241.

[108]In his Report No. 921 of 1891, the British vice-consul at Baṣrah observed that the trade of this port was "almost entirely in the hands of four British firms," Ḥaidar, "Land Problems of Iraq," p. 481. See also Muḥammad Salmān Ḥasan, *At-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī*, pp. 139 and 149.

[109]Literally, "enjoyment."

[110]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Revenue Department for 1919*, p. 15.

[111]The tax was at first applied only to the Mosul Wilāyah, and was not extended to Baghdād and Baṣrah until 1909, *Dalīl-ul-Mamlakat-il-'Irāqiyyah, 1935-1936*, pp. 237-240.

[112]For a summary of the regulations governing the collection of *at-tamattu*, see *ibid*,, pp. 239-240; and Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Revenue Department for 1919*, p. 16. For a list of the taxes to which local traders were liable in the second half of the nineteenth century, see Geary, *Through Asiatic Turkey*, I, 336-338.

[113]Great Britain, *Mesopotamia*, p. 120; and *Turkey in Europe*, p. 133; and Chīha, *La Province de Bagdad*, pp. 129-130. The Ottoman Bank had

been formed in Isṭanbūl in 1863 with a capital of ten million pounds. For the capital and actual ownership of the Eastern Bank, see p. 254.

[114]The *ṣarrāfs* were brokers, money changers, and private bankers.

[115]Article on Baṣrah by Isma‘īl Ḥaqqī Bey Babān Zādeh in *Ṭanīn* of 26 December 1910; *Further Correspondence, January-March 1911*, p. 8.

[116]Only briefly—between 1906 and 1913—was Britain’s economic position in Iraq challenged, and from the side of Germany, whose policy of *Drang Nach Osten* had, however, no more than partial and transient effects. For these effects, see Great Britain, *Mesopotamia*, pp. 108-109.

[117]Great Britain, Cab. 21/204/7212, letter of 15 November 1919 from Lt. Col. A. T. Wilson, acting civil commissioner, Baghdād, to secretary of state for India, London.

[118]The Chamber was actually founded in 1926, but members were not enrolled until 1927. A local chamber had been established under Turkish auspices in 1908 or thereabouts, but had broken up on the fall of Baghdād in 1917. See Ghanīmah, *Tijārat-ul-‘Irāq Qadīman wa Ḥadīthan*, p. 148.

[119]Despatch of 7 February 1910 from Consul General Lorimer, Baghdād, to Sir G. Lowther, Constantinople; *Further Correspondence, January-March 1910*, p. 133. 1910, p. 133.

[120]The title *shāhbandar* was, however, also applied to consuls who superintended the affairs and interests of the Sublime Porte in foreign countries. See Article VIII of the Anglo-Ottoman Treaty of 1809, Hertslet, *Collection of the Treaties and Conventions*, II, p. 373.

[121]Not all the small traders of Baghdād belonged to the Chamber, which, however, embraced all the significant merchants.

[122]Great Britain, Foreign Office, “Report on the Trade of Baghdād for the Year 1878/79” attached to letter of 12 June 1879 from Col. Nixon, consul general, Baghdād, to Sir A.Henry Layard, ambassador, Constantinople.

[123]“Report on the Jewish Community at Baghdād” prepared by H. D. S., submitted on 17 February 1910 by British consul general, and enclosed in despatch of 30 March 1910 from Sir G. Lowther, Constantinople, to Sir Edward Grey, London; *Further Correspondence, April-June 1910*, p. 4.

[124]Great Britain, *Mesopotamia*, p. 11.

[125]Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Report on the Administration of Iraq for 1927*, p. 38.

[126]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918 of Divisions and Districts of the Occupied Territories of Mesopotamia* (1919), I, 23.

[127]For this migration, see *Further Correspondence, April-June 1910*, p. 6.

[128]For the oppression of Jews in Persia, see Geary, *Through Asiatic Turkey*, I, 78-81.

[129]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 882/13, Arab Bureau Papers, Mes/18/3, despatch of 4 October 1918 from Baghdād to India Office.

[130]It should be noted in passing, however, that a number of important Jewish merchants remained behind.

[131]Great Britain, Committee on Industry and Trade, *Survey of Overseas Markets* (London, 1925), p. 247.

[132]For the abolition of the company's monopoly for British trade with India, see G. M. Trevelyan, *History of England* (New York, 1952), p. 224.

[133]Great Britain, Foreign Office, letter of 20 September 1841 from R. Taylor, political agent Turkish Arabia, to the Honourable, the Secret Committee, East India House, London.

[134]Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, I, Part I, 309-310.

[135]see text of instructions in Milburn, *Oriental* Commerce, I, 125-126.

[136]See, e.g., Geary, through *Asiatic Turkey*, I, p. 220; and Heude, *A Voy* age up *the Persian Gulf*, p. 182.

[137]Koran 2:275 refers.

[138]Deut. 24. See also *Jewish Encyclopedia*, XII, "Usury," p. 388.

[139]Chiha, *La Province de Bagdad*, p. 130.

[140]Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, II, 787.

[141]Aleksandr Adamov, *Irak Arabskii. Bassorskii Vilaiet v ego Proshlom i Nastoyashchem* (St. Petersburg, 1912), p. 84.

[142]Great Britain, *Sulaimāniyyah Administration Report for 1919*, p. 12.

[143]*Further Correspondence, January-June 1907*, p. 110.

[144]See, e.g., Heude, *A Voyage up the Persian Gulf*, p. 182.

[145]The *sarrāf bāshīs* of Baghdād were apparently often drawn in the 18th and early 19th centuries from the Jewish family of Sassoon. See Cecil Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty* (London, 1941), pp. 25-26; and Stanley Jackson, *The Sassoons* (London, 1968), p. 3. At Isṭanbūl the position was for a time a bone of contention between Jews and Armenians; Moise Franco, *Essai sur I'histoire des Israélites de I'Empire Ottoman*, pp. 132-133.

[146]Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty*, p. 39.

[147]See David Solomon Sassoon, *A History of the Jews in Baghdād* (Lecht-worth, 1949), p. 204.

[148]See pp. 253-254.

[149]Sas soon, *A History of the Jews*, p. 210.

[150]Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty*, pp. 75-76 and 100-101.

[151]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, p. 77.

[152]*Ibid*., pp. 77-78 and 81-82.

[153]Denis de Rivoyre, *Les Vrais Arabes et leur pays* (Paris, 1884), pp. 74-75. Rivoyre refers to the Sassoons merely by the initial S.

[154]See Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty*, pp. 11, 46, 49-50, 77-79, and 184-185; and Jackson, *The Sassoons*, passim.

[155]Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty*, p. 102.

[156]Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, p. 105.

[157]See Aleksandr Adamov, *Irak Arabskii. Bassorskii Vilaiet V ego Proshlom i Nastoyashchem* ("Arab Iraq. The Baṣrah Wilāyah. Its Past and Present") (St. Petersburg, 1912), pp. 220-221.

[158]For an English translation of the text of the law, see Great Britain, *Report. . . on the Administration of Iraq for 1931*, pp. 83-85.

[159]Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, pp. 16 ff. and 105.

[160]Israel-Joseph Benjamin II, *Cinq années de voyage en Orient 1846-1851* (Paris, 1856), p. 82.

[161]Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty*, p. 22; and Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, pp. 122-123.

[162]Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty*, pp. 24-25; and Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, p. 120.

[163]Israel-Joseph Benjamin II, *Cinq années de voyage*, p. 82.

[164]*1bid*., p. 81.

[165]Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, p. 103.

[166]"Report [of 17 February 1910] on the Jewish Community of Baghdād," *Further Correspondence*, pp. 5-6.

[167]Apparently 2½ percent of the bride price.

[168]Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, p. 103.

[169]Israel-Joseph Benjamin II, *Cinq années de voyage*, p. 82.

[170]Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, p. 103.

[171]See Table 9-5.

[172]Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, p. 160.

[173]Israel-Joseph Benjamin II, *Cinq années de voyage*, p. 81.

[174]Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, p. 161.

[175]*Ibid*., pp. 157-163.

[176]They were respectively Shaūl Ḥakhām Ezekiel, Ḥaskail Yehūdah, Yehūdah Zulūf, Shaūl Sha'shū'ah, Joseph Shantob, Zion 'Abūdī, Manāḥim Ṣāliḥ Daniel, and Mīr Elias.

[177]"Report [of 17 February 1910] on the Jewish Community at Baghdād," *Further Correspondence, April-June 1910*, p. 4.

[178]Articles 3, 6, 9, and 10 of the Jewish Community Law No. 77 of 26 May 1931; Great Britain, *Report. . . on the Administration of Iraq for 1931*, pp. 83-85.

[179]Pedro Texeira, *Travels*, p. 66.

[180]Rivoyre, *Les Vrais Arabes*, pp. 72 and 74.

[181]See Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, pp. 116-118.

[182]Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty*, p. 20.

[183]"Report [of 17 February 1910] on the Jewish Community at Baghdād," *Further Correspondence, April-June 1910*, p. 4.

[184]See, for example, Jean Baptiste Tavernier, *Les Six Voyages de . . .*, Part I, Book II (Paris, 1679), p. 234; Pedro Texeira, *Travels*, pp. 65-66; Long-rigg, *Four Centuries*, p. 88; and Great Britain, *Mesopotamia*, p. 36.

[185]Benjamin, *Cinq années de voyage*, p. 84. See also p. 81.

[186]"Report [of 17 February 1910] on the Jewish Community at Baghdād," *Further Correspondence, April-June 1910*, p. 6.

[187]I am indebted for these details to an old Jew of Baghdād whom I have known merely by the name of Abū Dhuhair.

[188]For the text of the manifesto, see Le Commandement de la IVme Armée, *La Verité sur la question syrienne* (Isṭanbūl: Imprimerie Tanine, 1916), p. 35.

[189]For examples of Jewish proverbs and superstitions, see Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, pp. 190-199.

[190]Roth, *The Sassoon Dynasty*, pp. 20-21.

[191]See *Dalīl-ul-Mamlakat-il-'Irāqiyyah for 1935-1936*, Commercial Section, p. 5; and Geary, *Through Asiatic Turkey*, I, 89.

[192]Ibrahīm ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyun. Akhbāruhum wa Majālisuhum*, pp. 63, 65, and 208; Alois Musil, *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins* (New York, 1928), p. 278; and *Ad-Dalīl-ul-'Irāqī-r-Rasmī li Sanat 1936*, p. 959.

[193]Ad-Durubī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, p. 63.

[194]See Rousseau, *Voyage de Bagdad à Alep*, p. 4.

[195]'Abd-ul-'Azīz al-Qaṣṣāb, *Min Dhikrayātī ("Some* of My Reminiscences") (Beirut, 1962), pp. 7-8.

[196]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, p. 208.

[197]*ibid*., p. 65.

[198]*Ad-Dalīl-'Irāqī-r-Rasmī li Sanat 1936*, p. 954.

[199]*Ibid*., pp. 958-959.

[200]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain)*, p. 9; and Ibrahīm Faṣīḥ ibn Ṣibghat-ul-Lāh al-Ḥaidarī, *'Unwān-ul-Majd fī Bayān Aḥwāl Baghdād, Baṣrah, wa Najd*, p. 168.

[201]Compare with remarks on pp. 261-262.

[202]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, pp. 191, 198, 200, and 214.

[203]*Ibid*., p. 215.

[204]*The Iraq Directory 1936*, p. 551.

[205]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, pp. 159-160.

[206]Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, III, 65-66.

[207]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, p. 79. See also Table 5-3.

[208]*Further Correspondence, April-June 1910*, p. 5.

[209]*Ibid.;* and Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, pp. 77 and 81.

[210]Great Britain, *Reports of Administration for 1918*, I, 241.

[211]The *Iraq Directory 1936*, Commercial Section, pp. 158-162.

[212]*Ibid*., pp. 183-184; and Ḥasan, *At-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī*, pp. 146-147.

[213]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, pp. 53, 61, 63, 66, 104, 189, 197, and 219; Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain)*, p. 47; and al-Ḥaidarī, *'Unwan-il-Majd*, pp. 164 and 170. For other trading families who hailed from Najd, see *ibid*,, pp. 168 ff.

[214]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, p. 197.

[215]Iraq, *Statistical Abstracts* for *1928/29-1934/35* (in Arabic), p. 105 and for *1943*, p. 193; and Article 3 of Law No. 51 of 1930 Amending Income Tax Law No. 52 of 1927, and Article 13 of Income Tax Law No. 36 of 1939.

[216]Iraq, *Report on Census of Distribution; Retail and Wholesale Trade of Iraq for 1956* (Baghdad, 1957), pp. 6 and 19.

[217]K. Ḥasīb, *The National Income of Iraq, 1953-1961* (London, 1964), p. 141.

[218]A private company with limited liability is a company of two or more individuals who subscribe to shares of its capital, and are liable for its debts to the amount of the nominal value of their shares.

[219]A collective company is a company of two or more persons who are jointly and severally responsible for all its debts.

[220]A public limited stock company is an association of a number of persons who own negotiable shares in a common capital stock, and are liable to no more of its debts than the nominal value of the shares owned by them.

[221]Figures obtained from the Directorate of Trade and from the Office of the Federation of Iraqi Industries.

[222]The Baghdad Chamber of Commerce, *At-Taqrīr-us-Sanawī li Sanat 1949*, p. 29; and Mamdūḥ Zakī, *Iraq Yearbook, 1953*, p. 179.

[223]It should be noted, however, that the weight and value of the average yearly export of wheat dropped from 38,600 tons and 273,000 dīnārs, to 11,200 tons and 196,000 dīnārs. See Ḥasan, *At-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī*, pp. 103 and 119.

[224]Iraq, *Statistical Abstracts* for *1927/28-1937/38*, pp. 107 and 113; and for *1958*, pp. 179 and 283.

[225]See Table 6-2.

[226]Great Britain, *Report of the Financial Mission Appointed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to Enquire into the Financial Position and Prospects of the Government of Iraq* (London, 1925), pp. 15-18.

[227]To be more accurate, the relevant article of the law—Article 14—provided, in the currency of the day, for a tax of "*7* pies on every rupee of income exceeding 4,000 rupees," the pie equaling 1/192 of a rupee.

[228]See Kāḍhim as-Sa'īdī, *At-Tashrī'-ul-Mālī fī-l-'Irāq. Ad-Ḍarā'ib* ("Financial Legislation in Iraq. The Taxes") (Baghdād, 1962), pp. 21-35.

[229]Article 12 of Income Tax Law No. 58 of 1956.

[230]In fiscal 1958 all tax-paying companies, Iraqi and foreign, excluding the oil companies, contributed 1.9 million dīnārs to the treasury, that is, 1.4 percent of the total public revenue of 129.3 million dīnārs. The contribution of all tax-paying individuals, other than government officials and employees of private firms—a category which included merchants and other moneyed elements—was 1.4 million dīnārs or 1.1 percent. See Table 6-2 and *Statistical Abstract for 1959*, p. 309.

[231]Conversation with a Baghdād merchant who does not wish to be identified.

[232]See Table 9-13.

[233]Ḥasan, *At-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī*, p. 251.

[234]The Italian weekly *II Punto* of 5 January 1963, quoting a "secret" report by the American consulting firm Arthur D. Little Inc. See *Iraq Times* of 8 January 1963.

[235]In 1958 the net earnings of the oil companies (after the payment of Iraq's share) was, according to their own reports, 79.88 million dīnārs (see Table 6-2), whereas, on a reliable estimate, the value added to the net national product by wholesale and retail trade amounted in the same year to 26.72 million dīnārs, by banking, insurance, and real estate to 7.30

million dīnārs, and by (governmental and private) manufacturing to 31.94 million dīnārs at current prices. See Ḥasīb, *The National Income of Iraq 1953-1961*, p. 18.

[236]Iraq *Statistical Abstract for . . . 1929/30-1935/36*, p. 137.

[237]Based on lists compiled by the Federation of Iraqi Industries from the files of the Directorate General of Trade and obtained through the courtesy of Dr. Ṭal‘at ash-Shaibānī, ex-secretary of the federation.

[238]Files No. 1/22/86, No. 1/22/92, and No. 1/16/888 of the Ministry of Economics’ Directorate of Companies’ Registration, quoted by Ḥasan, *At-Taṭawwur-ul-Iqtiṣādī*, pp. 275-276.

[239]Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 406/72E 962/190/93, letter of 1 February 1934 from Sir F. Humphrys, Baghdād, to Sir John Simon, London.

[240]From 1936 to 1946 the bank was actually known as the Agricultural-Industrial Bank.

[241]England’s share of Iraq’s total imports had been 31.5% in 1925-1932; 28.8% in 1933-1939; and 10% in 1940-1945. But British India’s portion, which equaled 20.4%, 7%, and 31% in the same years, must also be taken into account. Of course, after the mid-forties, India gained its independence. Its share dropped to 7.5% in 1946-1951 and to 3.7% in 1952-1958. That of Pakistan was negligible. See Ḥasan, *At-Taṭawwut-ul-Iqtiṣādī*, p. 257.

[242]Conversation with Muḥammad Dāmirchī, a prominent Baghdād merchant, February 1962.

[243]For two detailed studies on the subject under consideration in this paragraph, see Kathleen M. Langley, *The Industrialization of Iraq* (Cambridge, Mass., 1961) and Ferhang Jalal, *The Role of Government in the Industrialization of Iraq 1950-1965* (London, 1972).

[244]For the list of the Council’s membership, see Office of the Federation of Industries, *Al-Kitāb-us-Sanawī Li-t-Ittiḥād-iṣ-Ṣinā‘āt-il-‘Irāqī Li 1956-1957* (“The Yearbook of the Iraqi Federation of Industries for 1956-1957”) (Baghdād, 1957), pp. 22-26.

[245]Consult Table 9-4.

[246]The Iraqi private corporate commercial and industrial capital amounted to 53.3 million dīnārs. See Table 9-12.

[247]The trend toward concentration of property was already evident in fiscal 1945. In that year the tax-paying Iraqi companies, which numbered 75 in all, reported a total taxable income of 1,213,687 dīnārs (see Table 9-9), the top 22 accounting for 91.9 percent of this amount. These figures have been determined from the provisions of the tax laws and from data in Iraq's *Statistical Abstract for 1947*, p. 209.

[248]Letter of 22 June 1909 from Sir Edward Grey to Sir G. Lowther, *Further Correspondence, April-June 1909*, p. 209.

[249]Letter of 7 February 1910 from Mr. Cree of the British firm of Blockey, Cree, and Co., to the editor of *Truth; Further Correspondence, January-March 1910*, p. 159.

[250]Memorandum by British Consul General J. G. Lorimer Respecting the Affaire Lynch in Iraq, December 1909-January 1910, *ibid.*, pp. 101-102.

[251]Letter of 30 May 1910 from H. W. Maclean of the Lynch Co., to the F oreign Office, *Further Correspondence, April-June 1910*, p. 121.

[252]Letter from Mr. Cree to Consul General Lorimer dated 17 February 1910, *Further Correspondence, January-March 1910*, p. 159.

[253]I.e., the governor of Baghdād.

[254]Memorandum (of 31 January 1910) by British Consul General J. G. Lorimer Respecting the Affaire Lynch in Iraq, December 1909-January 1910, *Further Correspondence, January-March 1910*, pp. 102-106.

[255]Consult Table 9-3.

[256]See Table 9-12.

[257]See Table 6-2.

[258]The holding of the rank of *ra's-ut-tujjār* by Nu'mān Chalabī a1-Pāchachī is mentioned by Abū-th-Thanā' al-Alūsī in his *Maqāmāt*, p. 27. See al-'Azzāwī, *Ḍikra Abī-th-Thanā' Al-Alūsī*, pp. 23-24.

[259]Sulaimān Fā'iq, *Tārīkh Baghdād*, p. 61.

[260]Moise Franco, *Essai sur l'histoire des Israélites de l'Empire Ottoman*, pp. 132-133.

[261]Ibid.; and Heude, *A Voyage up the Persian Gulf*, p. 177.

[262]Sassoon, *A History of the Jews*, p. 123.

[263]Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan*, II, 184.

[264]Great Britain, Foreign Office, letter of 22 September 1841 from R. Taylor, political agent Turkish Arabia, to Lord Ponsonby, British ambassador at Constantinople.

[265]Anonymous manuscript written around 1862 and quoted by ‘Abbās al-‘Azzāwī, *Tārīkh-ul-‘lrāq Bain Iḥtilālain*, VII, 112-113.

[266]For the Daniels, see also Table 5-3.

[267]Wellsted, *Travels to the City of the Caliphs*, I, 162.

[268]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain)*, p. 39.

[269]Iraqi Police File No. 632 entitled “Ja‘far Agha.”

[270]Letter of 27 December 1909 from Charles M. Marling, Isṭanbūl, to Sir Edward Grey, *Further Correspondence, January-March 1910*, p. 38.

[271]*Ibid.*, p. 40; and Great Britain, Foreign Office, letter of 14 February 1911 from Sir Gerard Lowther, Isṭanbūl, to Sir Edward Grey, (Confidential) *Turkey. Annual Report for 1910*, p. 3.

[272]I.e., The General Jewish Colonization Association.

[273]The pamphlet was signed by Dr. J. Ginsberg, Louis Veisst, Gerson Simon, Benjamin Hirsch, George Marks, Dr. H. Senator, and Dr. Alfred Nossig; *Further Correspondence, July-September 1910*, pp. 157-159.

[274]Turkey’s minister of finance.

[275]I.e., premiership.

[276]Emphasis added.

[277]Letter of 31 August 1910 from Sir Gerard Lowther, Isṭanbūl, to Sir Edward Grey, *Further Correspondence, July-September 1910*, pp. 155-156.

[278]Great Britain, Foreign Office, letter of 14 February 1911 from Sir Gerard Lowther to Sir Edward Grey, (Confidential) *Turkey. Annual Report for 1910*, p. 3.

[279]*Further Correspondence, January-March 1910*, p. 125.

[280]For the Ṣābūnjī family, see also Tables 5-3 and 9-13.

[281]The Mosul Wilāyah or administrative division embraced at that time the provinces of Mosul, Kirkūk, Arbīl, and Sulaimāniyyah.

[282]The preceding paragraphs are based on Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Political Diary of the Baghdād Residency* for the week ending 19

October 1908, p. 118; letters of 15 and 22 October 1909 from H. E. Wilkie Young, vice-consul Mosul, to Sir G. A. Lowther, ambassador at Isṭanbūl, in File FO 195/2310; *Turkey. Annual Report for 1909*, p. 46; and letter of 31 March 1910 from Vice-Consul Greig to Sir G. Lowther, *Further Correspondence, April-June 1910*, p. 68.

283Great Britain, Foreign Office, File FO 195/2310, letter of 22 October 1909 from H. E. Wilkie Young, vice-consul Mosul, to Sir G. A. Lowther, ambassador at Isṭanbūl.

284Letter of 8 March 1911 from Vice-Consul Greig, Mosul, to Mr. Marling, *Further Correspondence, April-June 1911*, p. 33.

285This council came under the superintending Administrative Council of the Mosul Wilāyah.

286Emphasis added.

287Telegram of 10 January 1911 from Ṣafwat Bey, commander of the 23rd Brigade at Sulaimāniyyah to Nāḍhim Pasha, commandant of the VIth Army Corps, *Al-Mawṣil* (Official Organ of the Mosul Wilāyah), 5 February 1911, *Further Correspondence, April-June 1911*, pp. 35-36.

288Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Turkey Annual Report for 1911*, p. 37.

289Great Britain, oriental secretary to the high commissioner, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 24* of 13 December 1922, para. 1204.

290A region in the mid-Euphrates.

291District governor.

292Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins') File No. 276 entitled "Muḥsin ash-Shallāsh."

293For Ḥusain ar-Rāḥḥal, see also pp. 390 ff.

294The sharp rise in the fortunes of the Ḥadīd family in the forties and fifties must, however, be kept in mind.

295Conversation with Mrs. Ja'far Abū-t-Timman, February 1964.

296*Idem*; and *Min Awrāq Kāmil ach-Chādirchī* ("Some of the Papers of Kāmil ach-Chādirchī") (Beirut, 1971), pp. 84 and 87.

297Conversation, Mrs. Ja'far Abū-t-Timman.

298Legist.

299Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins') File No. 94 entitled "Ja'far Abū-t-Timman," entry dated 29 December 1927.

[300]Great Britain, Oriental Secretary of the High Commissioner, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 17* of 1 September 1922, p. 19; and Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins[1]) File entitled "The National Party." Entries dated 30 June 1928, 12 August 1930, 8 November 1931, and 18 November 1932.

[301]*Ibid*., entry dated 13 October 1928.

[302]Iraqi Police File No. J/222 entitled "Jam'iyyat Aṣḥāb-iṣ-Ṣanāi' " (Artisans' Association), note of 16 February 1929.

[303]Conversation with Muḥammad Ṣālih al-Qazzāz, leader of the Artisans' Association.

[304]Conversation, Mrs. Ja'far Abū-t-Timman; and Iraqi Police File No. 94, entitled "Ja'far Abū-t-Timman," entry dated 25 August 1928.

[305]Ibid.

[306]Conversation, Mrs. Ja'far Abū-t-Timman.

[307]*A1-Waṭan* (Baghdad), 14 December 1945. For the text of the statement in which Abū-t-Timman announced his temporary withdrawal from politics, see *Al-Ahālī* of 2 November 1933.

[308]Conversation with Muḥammad Ṣālih al-Qazzāz and Iraqi Police File No. J/222 entitled "Jam'iyyat Aṣḥāb-iṣ-Ṣanāi' " ("The Artisans' Association"), entries dated 3 August and 25 August 1930.

[309]Iraqi Police File No. 846, entitled "Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Qazzāz," entry dated 3 April 1945.

[310]Iraqi Police File No. J/223 entitled "Jam'iyyat 'Ummāl-il-Mikānīk aw Naqābat-ut-Ittiḥad-il-'Ummal fī-l-'Irāq," letter of 31 December 1933 from the minister of interior to the *mutaṣarrif* of Baghdād.

[311]Thus among the members of the National party were, apart from Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah (see p. 300), Fā'iq as-Sāmarrā'ī, a lawyer, a close supporter of Rashīd 'Ālī in 1941 and secretary or vice-chairman of the Independence party from 1946 to 1959; 'Abd-ul-Qāder Ismā'īl, an attorney and journalist, a founder in 1931 of *Al-Ahālī* group, a member in 1936-1937 of the Central Executive Committee of People's Reform, and in the forties and fifties a prominent communist; 'Āṣim Flayyeḥ, a tailor and the first secretary of the Communist party of Iraq; and Ghālī Zuwayyid, a slave and agent of the landed Sa'dūns family, and in the mid-thirties a leading member of the Nāṣiriyyah and Baṣrah Communist circles.

[312]See pp. 170 ff.

[313]See pp. 319 ff.

[314]Ṣaidā is a harbor town that is presently in Lebanon.

[315]Conversation, Ṣiddīq Shanshal.

[316]Great Britain, FO 371/23217/E 5661/72/93, personality note of 10 August 1939 on Colonel Ṣabbāgh by General Waterhouse of the British Military Mission.

[317]Iraqi Police File entitled "Nādī al-Muthanna bin Ḥārithah ash-Shaibānī," entry of 2 September 1935.

[318]E.g., Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, Ṣiddīq Shanshal, and Dr. ʻAbd-ul-Majīd al-Qaṣṣāb.

[319]E.g., Fā'iq as-Sāmarrā'ī and Dr. Farīd Zain-ud-Dīn.

[320]See Chapter 8.

[321]E.g., Dr. Ṣā'ib Shawkat and Dr. Sāmī Shawkat.

[322]Articles 2 , 3, and 6 of the Constitution of the Independence party.

[323]Iraqi Police File entitled "Ḥizb-ul-Istiqlāl" ("The Independence Party"), police note written in 1947.

[324]Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, *Muthakkirātī fī Ṣamīm-il-Aḥdāth 1918-1958* (Beirut. 1965). pp . 112-113.

[325]The exceptions were Ḥāzim aṣ-Ṣābūnjī of Mosul, who belonged to a wealthy chalabī family, and Ḥillah's ʻAlī al-Qazwīnī and Mosul's Ḥāzim al-Muftī and ʻAbd-ul-Qāder al-ʻUbaidī, all three of whom descended from families of landed sādah.

[326]Retired Staff General Ibrahīm ar-Rāwī, commander in 1941 of the Fourth Division, and Retired Staff Major Maḥmūd ad-Durrah, director in 1941 of the Department of Mobilization in the Ministry of Defence.

[327]Kubbah, *Muthakkirātī*, p. 16.

[328]For Yūnis as-Sabʻawī, see pp. 456 ff.

[329]This observation is taken from a short biographical statement prepared by the police in 1952. Iraqi Police File entitled "Ḥizb-ul-Istiqlāl" refers.

[330]Conversations with Muḥammad Mahdī Kubbah, Jamīl Kubbah, Fā'iq as-Sāmarrā'ī, Ṣiddīq Shanshal, and Kāmel Chādirchī.

[331]The *Sharīʻah* is the canon law of Islam.

[332]Conversations with ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm, Muḥammad Ḥadīd, Ḥusain Jamīl, Kāmel Chādirchī, and others.

[333]*Al-Ahālī*, 2, 10, and 11 January 1932. See also *Al -Ahālī* of 23 June 1932 and 13 May, 7 June, and 2 July 1933.

[334]See, for example, *Al-Ahālī*, 28 February and 15 April 1932.

[335]For example, the issues of 25, 26, 27, and 29 November 1933 carried for watchword the idea that “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.”

[336]See, e.g., *Al-Ahālī* of 3 June 1933, article entitled “In Struggle There Is Life.”

[337]See *Al-Ahālī of* 7 June 1933, article calling for a “social renewal” and “the movement of youth to the countryside.”

[338]See *Muṭāla‘āt fī-sh-Sha‘biyyah* (“Studies in Populism”) (Baghdād, 1935) especially pp. 7-10. Muḥammad Ḥadīd and ‘Alī Ḥaidar Sulaimān, an employee of the Ministry of Education and in the fifties an ambassador to the United States, contributed to this work which was, however, essentially the brain-child of ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm.

[339]Another organization—the Baghdād Club—which they sponsored two months later, fell in May of 1935 under the control of a group that subsequently made common cause with the Muthanna Club. Iraqi Police File entitled “Nādī Baghdād,” entries dated 25 November 1933, and 25 May and 31 August 1935.

[340]See p. 204.

[341]Conversation, Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, June 1958.

[342]Conversation, ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm, June 1958.

[343]Conversation, Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, June 1958.

[344]Iraqi Police File No. J/57 entitled “Jam‘yyat-ul-Iṣlāḥ-ish-Sha‘bī” (“The Association of People’s Reform”).

[345]Iraqi Police File entitled “Al-Ḥizb-ul-Waṭanī ad-Dīmuqraṭī” (“The National Democratic Party”), Vol. I.

[346]See pp. 440-441.

[347]See Majīd Khaddūrī, *Independent Iraq 1932-1958* (London, 1960), p. 358.

[348]See pp. 393 ff.

[349]See pp. 405 ff.

[350]Iraqi Police File No. 479 entitled “Abd-ul-Qāder Ismā‘īl.”

[351]Even though indubitably Marxist, the National Union party addressed itself exclusively to one immediate task: “the unity of the democratic forces of the country.” Aside from ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm, its founding members were Muḥammad Mahdī aj-Jawāhirī, a Shī‘ī poet-journalist from Najaf; Mūsa Ṣabbār, a Najafī Shī‘ī lawyer; Mūsa-sh-Shaikh Rādī, a Najafī Shī‘ī schoolteacher; Edward Qalyān, a Christian lawyer from Mosul; ‘Aṭā-1-Bakrī, a Mosulite Sunnī trader; and Jamīl Kubbah, a Baghdadī Shī‘ī lawyer of a mercantile *chalabī* background.

[352]The National Democratic Party, *Manhaj-ul-Ḥizb-il-Waṭanī-d-Dīmuqrāṭī wa Niḍhāmuhu-d-Dākhilī* (“The Program and Internal Rules of the National Democratic Party”) (Baghdad, 1946), pp. 1-10.

[353]Remark made by Ḥusain Jamīl at a meeting of the Central Committee of the National Democratic party held on 8 October 1947, Kāmel ach-Chādirchī’s Party Book, p. 39.

[354]Letter of 5 April 1947 from assistant commissioner of police, Baghdād, to the minister of interior, Iraqi Police File entitled “Al-Ḥizb-ul-Waṭanī ad-Dīmuqrāṭī,” Vol. I.

[355]Conversation, Ḥusain Jamīl, June 1958.

[356]Conversation, Qāsim Ḥasan, secretary of the National Democratic party from 1948 to 1954, June 1958.

[357]That is, all the founders except for Yūsuf-ul-Ḥājj Ilyās.

[358]Internal National Democratic Party Bulletin No. 1 of 29 June 1946, pp. 5-7.

[359]Internal National Democratic Party Bulletin No. 8 of 1 February 1947, pp. 8-10.

[360]The leader of these communists was the Mosul lawyer Kāmel Qazānchī.

[361]Memorandum of Chādirchī written on 15 August 1947 and read at closed sessions of the Central Administrative Committee held between 17 and 20 September 1947, Chādirchī’s Party Book, pp. 14, 17, 29, 35, and 36.

[362]Remarks made by Muḥammad Ḥadīd at closed sessions of the Central Administrative Committee held on 8 and 20 October and 5 November 1947, Chādirchī's Party Book, pp. 42, 43, 86, and 125.

[363]Remarks by Ḥusain Jamīl at the closed session of the Central Administrative Committee held on 20 October 1947, Chādirchī's Party Book, pp. 82, 85, and 87.

[364]Remarks of Zakī ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb at closed sessions of the Central Committee held on 11 and 29 October 1947 and his and Talʻat ash-Shaibānī's letters of resignation dated 16 November 1947, Chādirchī's Party Book, pp. 49, 92-93, and 129-132.

[365]*Ibid*., p. 133.

[366]Resolution of the party's Central Administrative Committee dated 26 October 1950, Chādirchī's Party Book, p. 159.

[367]*Manhaj-ul-Ḥizb-il-Waṭanī-d-Dīmuqrāṭī (*"*The* Programme of the National Democratic Party") (Baghdād, 1951), Point Five of the Economic Objectives of the Party.

[368]Office of the Federation of Iraqi Industries, *Al-Kitāb-us-Sanawī Li-t-Ittiḥād-iṣ-Ṣināʻāt-il-ʻIrāqī Li 1956-1957*, pp. 23, 24, and 27.

[369]For the contrary factors affecting industry, consult p. 272.

[370]See pp. 839-840.

[371]Conversation, Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, February 1962.

[372]Naʻīm Zilkha, Ibrahīm Ḥayīm, and Sassoon Ḥasqail of Baghdād, Isḥāq Ifrāyim of Kirkūk, Yaḥya Sumaikah of Mosul, and Rubain Sumaikh of Baṣrah.

[373]For example, they supported the unequal Treaties of 1922, 1926, and 1930, Great Britain, *Intelligence Report No 13* of 26 June 1924, p. 5, and *No. 13* of 25 June 1925, Appendix I, pp. 4-7; and ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārat*, III, 78-79.

[374]Great Britain, CAB 27/25/7383, note of 22 April 1918 by Sir Percy Cox, civil commissioner, Baghdād, on "The Future of Mesopotamia."

[375]Conversation, Ezra Zilkha, New York, 29 June 1973.

[376]Kubbah, *Muthakkirātī*, p. 246.

[377]See Table 7-3.

[378]The Christian businessman Yūsuf Ghanīmah received 6 and the Jewish merchant-financier Sassoon Ḥasqail 5 of the remaining 11 appointments.

[379]It should be noted that some of the office-holding Pāchachīs, though of trading background, were not themselves traders.

[380]The Chalabīs (see Table 9-13) received 17; the Pāchachīs (see Table 9-13), 13; Ḍiya' Ja'far, an engineer and big speculator of Persian origin, 9; Ṣādeq al-Bāṣṣam, a lawyer from a well-to-do Shī'ī trading family, 9; 'Abd-ul-Wahhāb Mirjān (see Table 9-13), 6; and Muḥsin ash-Shallāsh (see pp. 292-293), 5 appointments.

[381]Thus Nūrī Fattāḥ is related, on his mother's side, to the Pāchachīs. He is also the brother-in-law of Ibrahīm al-Ḥājj Ṣālih and the father-in-law of Ḥamīd Dāmirchī. Again, one of the Dāmirchīs, Muḥammad, has married into the Uzrīs, who are allied matrimonially with the Chalabīs. Moreover, there are marital ties between the Ḥadīds and the Ṣābunjīs.

[382]See pp. 274-275 and 282-283.

[383]Consult Table 9-13.

[384]Ad-Durūbī, *Al-Baghdādiyyūn*, p. 83.

[385]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain (1920)*, p. 7, and entry entitled "Committee of Union and Progress," p. 22.

[386]*Ibid*., p. 58.

[387]Bāzirgān, *Al-Waqāi'ul-Ḥaqīqiyyah fī-th-Thawrat-il-Irāqiyyah*, p. 69.

[388]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, p. 72.

[389]For the Chalabīs, consult Table 9-13.

[390]Conversation, Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, ex-premier, 1965.

[391]Originally the Chalabīs were Sunnīs, and their name was not Chalabī but Ḥjaijī. In one version, that of Jawād Chalabī, they were Arabs from Arbīl and migrated to Kāḍhimiyyah a few hundred years ago, but in another version, that of Aḥmad Chalabī, they descended from the Arab tribe of Ṭayy and had lived in Jazīrat ibn 'Amrū, north of Mosul.

[392]Conversation, Jawād Chalabī, 1965.

[393]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 14* of 9 July 1925, para. 307.

[394]Conversation, Jawād Chalabī.

[395]Consult Table 9-13.

[396]Unless otherwise indicated, I am indebted for all the facts and figures in this and the following passages to a conversation with Nūrī Fattāḥ, May 1963.

[397]For al-Ḥājj Ṣāliḥ Ibrahīm, see Table 9-13.

[398]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk and Sulaimāniyyah (1922-1923)*, p. 35, entry relating to the Fattāḥs, as amended by Major J. F. Wilkins.

[399]Faiṣal's Confidential Memorandum of March 1933, al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, III, 292-293.

[400]The prominent merchants Yāsīn al-Khuḍairī, ʻAbd-ul-Ḥusain ach-Chalabī, and Muṣṭafa aṣ-Ṣābūnjī were also principal stockholders in the company.

[401]Consult Table 9-13.

[402]Conversation, Nūrī Fattāḥ, May 1963.

10 The Crown and the Ex-Sharifīan Officers

[1]Great Britain, Cab. 21/204/7212, note of 15 November 1919 by Gertrude Bell entitled "Syria in October 1919."

[2]See p. 29.

[3]I am indebted for this point to Kāmel ach-Chādirchī.

[4]For the text of the reply, see Muḥammad Ṭāher al-ʻUmarī, *Tārīkh Muqad-darāt-il-ʻIrāq-is-Siyāsiyyah* ("The History of the Political Destinies of Iraq") (Baghdād, 1925), I, 227.

[5]Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-ʻUrūbah fī-l-ʻIrāq*, p. 248.

[6]Ismāʻīl Ḥaqqī Babān, *De Stamboul à Bagdad*, p. 28.

[7]For the text of the Memorandum, see ʻAbd-ur-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt-il-ʻIrāqiyyah*, III, 286-293. For the quoted statement, see p. 287.

[8]Conversation, Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, ex-premier, March 1965.

[9]See p. 115.

[10]Amīn Sa‘īd, *A th-Thawrat-ul-‘Arabiyyat-ul-Kubra* (“The Great Arab Revolt”) I, *An-Niḍāl Bain-al-‘Arab wa-l-Atrāk* (“The Struggle between the Arabs and the Turks”) (Cairo, undated but published in the mid-thirties), pp. 46-47.

[11]A translation of this petition is in Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins’) File No. 239 entitled “Al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī” (The National Party). Among the signatories were Ḥamdī al-Pāchachī, a prominent nationalist and a future premier; Muḥammad Amīn ach-Charchafchī, the head of the Nahḍah party; and Muḥammad Ḥasan Kubbah, a Shī‘ī notable. Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman, the leader of the National party, refused to sign the petition.

[12]Moslem sermon.

[13]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report No 3* of 7 February 1924, para. 93.

[14]This is what his adviser-to-be Kinahan Cornwallis had suggested in January of 1921; Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 371/6349/E 583/100/93, note by Cornwallis of 8 January 1921 of an interview with Faiṣal on 7 January 1921.

[15]Great Britain, FO 371/6352/E 9443/100/93, paraphrase telegram of 16 August 1921 from the secretary of state for the colonies to the high commissioner, Mesopotamia.

[16]Great Britain, FO 371/6352/E 9483/100/93, paraphrase telegram No. 397 of 17 August 1921 from the high commissioner, Mesopotamia, to the secretary of state for the colonies.

[17]Great Britain, FO 371/6352/E 9406/100/93, paraphrase telegram of 16 August 1921 from the high commissioner, Mesopotamia, to the secretary of state for the colonies.

[18]Great Britain, FO 371/6350/E 4830/100/93, telegram of 14 March 1921.

[19]Great Britain, FO 371/12260/E 4343/86/65, memorandum of 28 September 1927, entitled “Iraq: Suggested Treaty Revision.”

[20]Great Britain, FO 371/7770/E 2621/33/65, paraphrase telegram of 27 February 1922 from Sir Percy Cox, high commissioner for Iraq, to the secretary of state for the colonies.

[21]Great Britain, Cab. 23/31, note that is undated but was written in late August 1922, and refers to a Cabinet conference on Iraq.

[22]Shaikh Mahdī al-Khāliṣī and two of his sons, Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 52, entitled "Shaikh Mahdī al-Khāliṣī."

[23]The protest was signed by the same four hundred personages that appealed to the Ottoman Caliph in July 1923, see note 11 above. Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 239 refers.

[24]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 103 entitled "Nūrī Sa'īd Pasha."

[25]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 796 entitled "Jamīl al-Midfa 'ī."

[26]Great Britain, FO 371/12260/E 4343/86/65, memorandum of 28 September 1927 by Middle East Department, Colonial Office, entitled "Iraq: Suggested Treaty Revision."

[27]The king left for England on 6 August 1927. *An-Nahdah* was first published on 10 August 1927.

[28]Great Britain, (Secret) *Supplement to Abstract of Intelligence (Iraq) No 38* of 17 September 1927, para. 10.

[29]Great Britain, FO 371/12260/E 4529/86/65, memorandum of a conversation at the Hyde Park Hotel on 28 October 1927.

[30]Great Britain, (Secret) *Supplement to Abstract of Intelligence No 50* of 10 December 1927, para. 1.

[31]Ḥabīb al-Mallāk and 'Abd-uj-Jabbār al-Mallāk, among others.

[32]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 1924 entitled "Movements of Separation of Baṣrah from Iraq."

[33]The British Colonial Office in its *Report. . . to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of Iraq for 1927* (p. 57) spoke of an intention to take certain measures with a view to checking Dawīsh incursions but, as is apparent from the discussion that King Faiṣal had with Charchafchī on 3 March 1928—see p. 330—no effective action followed.

[34]Great Britain, FO 371/13757/E 244/6/93, paraphrase telegram of 11 January 1929 from the secretary of state for the colonies to the high commissioner for Iraq.

[35]For Charchafchī, see pp. 327-328.

[36]'Allāwī was a leading member of the Nahḍah party.

[37]"The succession of the Commander of the Faithful."

[38]Letter of 6 March 1928 from J. F. Wilkins to K. Cornwallis, adviser to the Ministry of Interior, Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File entitled "Personal Letters."

[39]Great Britain, FO 371/13055/E 5000/133/65, paraphrase telegram of 16 October 1928 from the high commissioner for Iraq to the secretary of state for the colonies.

[40]Great Britain, FO 371/13757/E 1131/6/93, note of 29 January 1929 by Sir Henry Dobbs entitled "Recent Conversations with 'Abd-ul-Muḥsin Beg and with His Majesty King Faiṣal."

[41]See pp. 25 ff.

[42]See Table 6-2.

[43]Great Britain, FO 371/12261/E 4884/86/65, memorandum of 16 October 1927 from K. Cornwallis, adviser, Ministry of Interior, to high commissioner for Iraq.

[44]Great Britain, FO 371/16903/E 6832/105/93, minute of 10 November 1933 by G. W. Rendel of the Foreign Office.

[45]Ṭālib Mushtāq, *Awrāq Ayyāmī, 1900-1958*, p. 584.

[46]Conversation, Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, March 1965.

[47]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 103, entitled "Nūrī Sa'īd Pasha."

[48]For example, his friend Taḥsīn 'Alī was appointed as police commandant at Mosul, and his brother-in-law Taḥsīn al-'Askarī as police commandant at Baghdād.

[49]File No. 103.

[50]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report (Iraq) No 16* of 7 August 1924, para. 542.

[51]The nineteenth senior officer, a lieutenant general and the chief of staff in 1936, was Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, a brother of Yāsīn al-Hāshimī. For the list of senior army officers in 1936, see *The Iraq Directory. . . 1936*, pp. 306-307.

[52]Great Britain, FO 371/12261/E 4884/86/65, letter of 21 October 1927 from E. L. Ellington, acting high commissioner for Iraq, to Sir J. E. Shuckburgh, Colonial Office.

[53]The sixth portfolio, that of Education, went to the Shī‘ī merchant ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain ach-Chalabī.

[54]Letter of 24 April 1930 from J. F. Wilkins to the adviser of the minister of interior, Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins’) File No. 103 entitled “Nūrī Sa ‘īd Pasha.”

[55]Conversation, C.J.Edmonds, London, January 1962.

[56]Conversations with Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, March 1965, and Muḥammad Fakhrī aj-Jamīl, October 1971.

[57]Letter of 17 July 1930 from J. F. Wilkins to the adviser of the minister of interior, Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins’) File No. 103.

[58]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins’) File entitled “al-‘Ahd Al-‘Irāqī” (“The Iraqi Covenant”), entry in Wilkins’ handwriting dated 13 October 1923.

[59]Idem, entry of 12 October 1923.

[60]See pp. 327 ff.

[61]Air Vice Marshal Edward Ellington.

[62]Mr. Bourdillon.

[63]Great Britain, FO 371/12260/E 4553/86/65, memorandum of 18 October 1927 by High Commissioner Henry Dobbs.

[64]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins’) File No. 103 entitled “Nūrī Sa‘īd Pasha.”

[65]Great Britain, FO 371/13758/E 3255/6/93, paraphrase telegram of 22 June 1929 from High Commissioner G. Clayton to secretary of state for the colonies.

[66]See, e.g., Great Britain, FO 406/76/E 168/84/65, letter of 25 December 1937 from Sir A. Clark Kerr to Mr. Eden; and FO 371/21847/E 6027/45/93, Mr. Baxter’s minute of 12 October 1938.

[67]C. J. Edmonds, adviser, Ministry of Interior, quoted in letter of 23 December 1936 from Sir A. C. Kerr to G. W. Rendel, FO 371/20795/E 66/14/93.

[68]Great Britain, FO 371/16032/E 6230/9/93, J. H. Hall’s minute of 30 November 1932.

[69]Great Britain, FO 371/16032/E 6230/9/93, letter of 17 November 1932 from Sir F. Humphrys, Baghdād, to Sir John Simon, London.

[70]Acting British Ambassador Herbert Young had at one point advanced an argument to that effect, but with reference to the king’s candidate for

the premiership, Yasīn al-Hāshimī. In his response, however, the king applied the argument to Nūrī .

[71]Great Britain, FO 371/16049/E 5950/3910/93, letter of 3 November 1932 from Sir Herbert Young to Sir John Simon.

[72]See p. 201.

[73]Great Britain, FO 371/16049/E 5950/3910/93, letter of 3 November 1932 from Sir Herbert Young, Baghdād, to Sir John Simon, London.

[74]Great Britain, FO 371/16903/E 105/105/93, Mr. Hall's minute of 9 January 1933.

[75]See pp. 202 ff.

[76]Great Britain, FO 406/73/E 7470/278/93, letter of 6 December 1935 from Sir A. Clark Kerr, Baghdād, to Sir Samuel Hoare.

[77]Great Britain, FO 406/73/E 1792/278/93, letter of 6 March 1935 from Sir F. Humphrys, Baghdād, to Sir John Simon.

[78]Great Britain, FO 406/73/E 1315/278/93, letter of 25 February 1935 from Sir F. Humphrys to Sir John Simon.

[79]Great Britain, FO 371/20013/E 6797/1419/93, telegram of 30 October 1936 from Sir A. Clark Kerr to Foreign Office; and FO 371/20014/E 7145/1419/93, letter of 2 November 1936 from A. Clark Kerr to Anthony Eden.

[80]Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-'Urūbah fī-l-'Irāq*, p. 113.

[81]Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-'Urūbah*, p. 70.

[82]FO 406/76/E 168/84/65, letter of 25 December 1937 from A. Clark Kerr to Mr. Eden.

[83]For Nūrī and his interest in Ibn Sa'ūd, see also p. 341.

[84]Great Britain, FO 371/21846/E 458/45/93, memorandum by Squadron Leader Hindle-James recording an interview he had with Nūrī in Cairo on 7 January 1938.

[85]Great Britain, FO 371/21846/E 458/45/93, note of 7 February 1938 from Lacy Baggallay, Foreign Office, to J.Morgan, Baghdād.

[86]Great Britain, 371/21847/E 7060/45/93, letter of 16 November 1938 from Sir M. Peterson, Baghdād, to Viscount Halifax.

[87]Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-'Urūbah*, p. 123.

[88]Great Britain, FO 371/21847/E 7488/45/93, letter of 21 November 1938 from Mr. G. H. Bateman, Cairo, to Sir M. Peterson, Baghdād; and letter of 29 November 1938 from Peterson to Bateman.

[89]Great Britain, FO 371/16903/E 105/105/93, Mr. Hall's minute of 9 January 1933.

[90]For the affair of Princess ʻAzzah, see p. 204.

[91]Great Britain, FO 406/74/E 4057/3089/93, letter of 19 June 1936 from Sir A. Clark Kerr to Mr. Eden.

[92]Great Britain, FO 371/23200/E 72/72/93, Foreign Office note of 3 January 1939.

[93]Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-ʻUrūbah*, p. 95.

[94]Great Britain, FO 371/21847/E 7060/45/93, letter of 16 November 1938 from Sir M. Peterson to Viscount Halifax.

[95]W. E. Houston-Boswall.

[96]Great Britain, FO 371/E 281/281/93, letter of 31 December 1938 from Sir M. Peterson to Sir Lancelot Oliphant.

[97]Muwaffaq al-Alūsī, a consul general.

[98]Ṭaha al-Hāshimī, *Muthakkirāt*, p. 472.

[99]Great Britain, FO 371/21847/E 7905/45/93, telegram of 27 December 1938 from Sir M. Peterson to Foreign Office.

[100]Great Britain, FO 371/23200/E 72/72/93, letter of 27 December 1938 from M. Peterson to Viscount Halifax.

[101]Great Britain, FO 371/23200/E 1399/72/93, telegram of 22 February 1939 from M. Peterson to the Foreign Office.

[102]Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-ʻUrūbah*, pp. 95-96.

[103]Great Britain, FO 371/23200/E 1640/72/93, telegram of 1 March 1939 from M. Peterson to Foreign Office.

[104]Ex-Staff Major Maḥmūd ad-Durrah, *Al-Ḥarb-ul-ʻIrāqiyyat-ul-Barīṭāniyyah*, p. 98; and Great Britain, FO 371/23200/E 1704/72/93, telegram of 6 March 1939 from M. Peterson to Foreign Office.

[105]Great Britain, FO 371/21846/E 4196/45/93, letter of 28 June 1938 from M. Peterson to Viscount Halifax and FO 371/21846/E 4638/45/93, letter of 15 July 1938 from Peterson to Halifax.

[106]See p. 341.

[107]Great Britain, FO 371/E 281/281/93, letter of 31 December 1938 from M. Peterson to Sir Lancelot Oliphant.

[108]Great Britain, FO 371/E 281/281/93, letter of 11 January 1939 from L. Oliphant to M. Peterson.

[109]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, MS, "Wujūh ʻIrāqiyyah ʻAbra-t-Tārīkh," p. 104.

[110]The name, as it appears in the original handwritten Foreign Office minute, is not very legible and could be read as "Baxter."

[111]Great Britain, FO 371/23200/E 2459/72/93, undated handwritten note of Hookwart (?) of the Foreign Office.

[112]ʻAbd Saʻd.

[113]ʻAlī bin ʻAbdallah.

[114]See Mushtāq, *Awrāq Ayyāmī, 1900-1958*, pp. 323-324; and Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-ʻUrubah*, pp. 87-88.

[115]Great Britain, FO 371/23200/E 2459/72/93, telegram of 4 April 1939 from Mr. Houston-Boswall to the Foreign Office.

[116]Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-ʻUrūbah*, pp. 83 and 97.

[117]Great Britain, FO 371/23201/E 2820/72/93, letter of 11 April 1939 from Mr. Houston-Boswall, Baghdād, to Viscount Halifax.

[118]As-Suwaidī, "Wujūh ʻIrāqiyyah ʻAbra-t-Tarīkh," p. 98.

[119]See p. 336.

[120]Great Britain, FO E 6741/72/93, telegram of 30 September 1939 from Sir Basil Newton to the Foreign Office.

[121]Great Britain, FO E 498/448/93, note of 9 February 1940 by Mr. Crosth-waite of the Foreign Office.

[122]Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-ʻUrūbah*, p. 226.

[123]*Ibid*,, pp. 121 ff.

[124]Great Britain, FO E 1806/1/93, letter of 1 April 1941 from C.J.Edmonds to Sir Basil Newton.

[125]On two occasions, the motives alleged for invoking martial law were emergencies originating outside Iraq—the Palestine War in 1948 and the Suez War in 1956—but the law was used essentially to suppress dissent and combat oppositional parties. For a list of the periods in which martial law was in effect see Al-Haṣanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, IX, 240-241.

[126]Great Britain, FO E 345/37/93, minute of Sir A. Cadogan dated 12 January 1944.

[127]Great Britain, FO E 2596/204/93, report of 8 March 1942 from Sir K. Cornwallis to Mr. Eden.

[128]Great Britain, FO E 3009/1/93, minutes of 9 June 1941 by Mr. Crosth-waite and of 10 June 1941 by A. Cadogan.

[129]Great Britain, FO E 6476/1/93, telegram of 8 October 1941 from Sir K. Cornwallis, Baghdād, to Foreign Office.

[130]Great Britain, FO E 6477/1/93, telegram of 8 October 1941 from Sir K. Cornwallis to the Foreign Office; E 258/204/93, report of 14 December 1941 from Cornwallis to Anthony Eden; E 2596/204/93, report of 8 March 1942 from Cornwallis to Eden; and E 4722/204/93, report of 2 August 1942 from Cornwallis to Eden.

[131]Great Britain, FO E 7266/489/93, letter of 6 November 1943 from Cornwallis to Eden.

[132]Great Britain, FO E 345/37/93, minute of Mr. Chaplin of the Foreign Office dated 12 January 1944.

[133]Great Britain, FO E 489/489/93, extract from Security Intelligence Summary No. 48 issued on 21 December 1942 by Defence Security Office, C.I.C.I., Iraq, and Comment of Cornwallis thereon.

[134]Great Britain, FO E 489/489/93, letter of 28 December 1942 from K. Cornwallis to General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson.

[135]Great Britain, FO E 5216/44/93, telegram of 3 September 1943 from Foreign Office to Embassy, Baghdād.

[136]See p. 344.

[137]Great Britain, FO E 5950/489/93, letter of 27 September 1943 from K. Cornwallis to Sir M. Peterson.

[138]Great Britain, FO E 5632/489/93, telegram of 7 September 1943 from Mr. Thompson to Foreign Office and E 1336/37/93, letter of 19 February 1944 from K. Cornwallis to Sir A. Cadogan.

[139]Great Britain, FO E 608/195/93, letter of 9 January 1945 from K. Cornwallis to Anthony Eden.

[140]Great Britain, FO E 281/281/93, letter of 31 December 1938 from Sir Maurice Peterson to Sir Lancelot Oliphant.

[141]As-Suwaidī, “Wujūh ‘Irāqiyyah ‘Abra-t-Tārīkh, p. 97.

[142]Conversation, Kāmel Chādirchī, February 1962.

[143]Great Britain, FO E 2199/489/93, telegram of 6 April 1943 from K. Cornwallis to Foreign Office. The amendment of the king’s power was proposed to Parliament in March and approved in May of 1943.

[144]Great Britain, FO E 2884/489/93, telegram of 17 May 1943 from K. Cornwallis to Foreign Office.

[145]Conversation, ex-deputy Muḥammad Fakhrī aj-Jamīl, October 1971.

[146]Great Britain, FO E 6362/489/93, extract from a private letter dated 6 October 1943 from British Ambassador to Mr. Chaplin of the Foreign Office; and E 7407/489/93, letter of 12 November 1943 from Cornwallis to Eden.

[147]Iraqi Police File entitled “Ḥizb-ul-Ittiḥād ad-Dustūrī” (“The Constitutional Union Party”) (Nūrī’s party) Political Police Report of 4 July 1954; and Muṣṭafa al-‘Umarī, manuscript, “Yawmiyyāt” (“Diary”), entry of 18 March 1952.

[148]Khalīl Kannah (a relative by marriage and a protégé of Nūrī), *Al-‘Irāq*,

Amsuhu wa Ghaduhu (“Iraq, its Past and Future”) (Beirut, 1966), pp. 158 and 284.

[149]Ibid., p. 133.

[150]*Ibid*., pp. 158 and 166; and conversations with Kāmel Chādirchī, February 1962, and Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, March 1965.

[151]Iraqi Police File entitled “Ḥizb-ul-Ittiḥād ad-Dustūrī,” Political Police Report of 4 July 1954.

[152]Fāliḥ Ḥandhal (of the Royal Guard), *Asrār Maqtal-il-‘Āilat-il-Mālikah (fī-l-‘Iraq*, p. 45.

[153]See Chapters 22, 30, and 39.

[154]Involved in the unrest were the peasants of the village of ‘Arbat (1947-1948); the district of Warmawa (1953); and the region between Rumaithah and Daghghārah (April 1958); as well as the peasants of the tribes of Albū Mutai-wit in Mosul province (1946); al-Azairij in ‘Amārah (1952); Diza’ī in Arbīl (1953); and Banī Zuraij in Dīwāniyyah (1955).

[155]See Table 2-2.

[156]See Table 17-2.

[157]See Table 17-5.

[158]See pp. 105 ff.

[159]See p. 274.

[160]See Tables 5-1 and 5-3.

[161]Great Britain, FO E 7266/489/93, letter of 6 November 1943 from K. Cornwallis to Anthony Eden.

[162]Great Britain, *Intelligence Report No 19* of 17 September 1925, para. 492.

[163]Great Britain, *Intelligence Report No 5 of 1* March 1922, para. 199.

[164]Great Britain, FO 371/12260/E 4553/86/65, memorandum of Sir Henry Dobbs dated 18 October 1927.

[165]*Al-Ḥayāt* Publishing House, *Majzarat Qaṣr ar-Riḥāb* ("The Massacre at Qaṣr ar-Riḥāb") (Beirut, 1960), p. 20.

[166]*L'Orient* (Beirut), 13 March 1963.

[167]See Table 5-3.

[168]Conversation, Ḥusain Jamīl, February 1962.

[169]Conversation, Muḥammad Fakhrī Jamīl, 20 October 1971.

[170]British Ambassador Sir A. Clark Kerr paraphrasing Premier Ḥikmat Sulaimān, Great Britain, FO 371/20014/E 7624/1419/93, Kerr's minute of 20 November 1936.

[171]Ex-Premier Ṣāliḥ Jabr's open letter to Nūrī dated 6 September 1954. Text in Iraqi Police File entitled "Ḥizb-ul-Ummah al-Ishtirākī" ("The Socialist Party of the Nation").

[172]See Table 10-3.

[173]Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, *Muthakkirātī*, p. 166.

[174]Conversation, Muḥammad Fakhrī Jamīl, October 1971.

[175]See Table 10-3.

[176]See p. 317.

[177]See Table 10-3.

[178]Great Britain, FO E 649/37/93, telegram of 27 January 1944 from Corn-wallis to Foreign Office.

[179]See p. 764 and Table 41-1.

[180]See p. 348.

11 The Earliest “Levelers”; the Armenian Hentchak; the Jewish Communists; and the Communist International

[1]*Al-Hilāl* (Cairo), Part XIV, Year 2, of 15 March 1894, p. 475.

[2]*Al-Mufīd*, No. 95 of 11 August 1922.

[3]Great Britain, Office of the Oriental Secretary of the High Commissioner, Baghdād, *Intelligence Report No 16* of 15 August 1922, para. 775.

[4]For the stratum of *sādah*, turn to Chapter 7.

[5]Kawākibī’s thought included varied and not always reconcilable elements. In the following passages the elements relevant to our history are isolated and cannot, unfortunately—for considerations of space—be related to his thought as a whole.

[6]*Ṭabāi‘ a1-Istibdād* (The Attributes of Tyranny), (Cairo, 190o[?]), p. 71.

[7]*Ibid*., p. 72

[8]*Ibid*., p. 70.

[9]*Ibid*., p. 68.

[10]*Ibid*., p. 70.

[11]*Ibid*, p. 72.

[12]*Ibid*., p. 79.

[13]*Ibid*.

[14]*Ibid*., p. 78.

[15]*Ṭabāi ‘a1-Istibdād* (The Attributes of Tyranny) (Cairo, 1900[?]), pp. 76-78.

[16]*Ibid*., p. 76.

[17]*Ibid*., p. 173.

[18]For an explanation as to why al-Kawākibī and the *ashrāf* to which he belonged were at that time in a restless and disaffected state of mind, see pp. 165 ff.

[19]*Ishtirākiyyah*—which was then the term for “Communist” and not for “Socialist,” as at present. The word for “Socialist” was *“ij-timā‘iyyah.”* See Jamāl-ud-Dīh al-Afghānī, *Ar-Radd ‘Ala-d-Dahriyyīn* “The

Refutation of the Materialists" (Cairo, n.d.), p. 69; and *Al-Hilāl*, Year 16, XVI, Part 5 of 1 February 1908, 265.

[20]*Ṭabāi' al-Istibdād*, p. 25.

[21]*Ṭabāi' al-Istibdād*, pp.74-75; and *Umm-ul-Qura* ("The Mother-City") (original undated edition), p. 35.

[22]Al-Kawākibī, *Tabāi'*, p. 75. *'Ushr* was the tithe on the land produce and *kharāj* the tax paid on landed property.

[23]From the Proceedings of the Iraqi House of Deputies, Session of 7 June 1937, as reported by *Al-Ahātī*, Year 6, No. 606 of 8 June 1937. Compare ar-Raṣāfī's statement with al-Kawākibī's observations in *Umm-ul-Qura*, p. 35.

[24]See *Al-Mashriq* (Beirut), Year 11, No. 10 of October 1908, pp. 792-793; and Year 12, No. 2 of February 1909, p. 96.

[25]See letter of November 1911 from British Consul General Cumberbatch, Beirut, to Sir G. Lowther, Constantinople, in Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Further Correspondence on Asiatic Turkey (October-December 1911)* (Confidential print), p. 72.

[26]*A1-Mashriq*, No. 2 of February 1909, p. 96.

[27]The men of letters concerned were Amīn ar-Rīḥānī, Khairallah Khairallah, Dāūd Majā'iṣ, George Nichola Bāz, and others.

[28]Elias Ṣāliḥ, a student from al-Lādhqiyyah.

[29]Man of religion.

[30]*Ibid*. See also Amīn ar-Rīḥānī, *Ar-Rīḥāniyyāt* (2nd impression, Beirut, 1923), II, 115-150.

[31]An *amīr* is a chief or prince.

[32]The *imām* in this context is the leader of the Moslem congregational prayer.

[33]*A1-Mashriq*, Year 11, No. 11 of November 1908, pp. 866-869; and Year 12, No. 2 of February 1909, pp. 94-95.

[34]*Ar-Rīḥānīyyat*, I, 113-114; II, 117-118, etc.

[35]See, e.g., *Ar-Rīḥānīyyat*, I, 74-78.

[36]*Ibid*., II, 94-97.

[37]In an article entitled "The True Socialism" in *Al-Muqtaṭaf*, XLII, Part I of January 1913, 9-16, Shumayyil identified his socialism as one of the

“natural” variety and based on “the principle of the natural sciences.” Its aim was a society in which all will work and be of use, and each will benefit according to his merits.

[38]Conversation with the author.

[39]Iraqi Police File entitled “Al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al-Lādīnī.”

[40]Salāmah Mūsa, *Al-Ishtirākiyyah* (“Socialism”) (Cairo, 1913).

[41]The information that follows is based on a conversation in 1962 with Arsen Kidour, a leader of the Hentchak in Beirut and on a letter dated 14 June 1937, written by Kidour to an Armenian student group at the American University of Beirut. The letter was intercepted and is in Iraqi Police File No. 1158 entitled “Arsen Kitour.”

[42]“The Spark”– *Iskra*–was the name of the organ of the Bolshevik party till 1904.

[43]Arsen Kidour to this writer.

[44]In the British intelligence records mention is made only of a plot to murder Enver Pasha, the minister of war; Iraqi Police File No. 1158.

[45]See pp. 389 and 392-393.

[46]Spartacus is the name of the leader of the servile uprising against Rome (73-71 B.C.), and a title adopted by a German Communist group after World War I.

[47]Conversations, Arsen Kidour, Yūsuf Yazbek.

[48]Note of 28 September 1921 by N. W. Clayton, director general of public security, Cairo, Public Security P. F. (Personal File) No. 754 entitled “Joseph Rosenthal,” Great Britain, Foreign Office, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[49]*Al-Muqaṭṭam*, No. 10659 of 25 March 1924.

[50]Great Britain, FO 141/779, File No. 9065, “Note on Rosenthal.”

[51]Note in Public Security File No. 2753, entitled “Edward Zaidman” (a Bolshevik courier), Great Britain, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[52]“General Confederation of Labor.”

[53]Alexandria Police Report of 10 August 1921, enclosed in Letter No. B. 2 (23) of 29 August 1921 from the Director General of Public Security to the Chancery of the British Residency, Cairo, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[54]Letter No. 411 of 31 August 1919, from E. H. H. Allenby, the British Residency, Ramleh, to Earl Curson of Kedleston, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[55]The more important members were Jordanis Jordanidis, a Greek professor at Victoria College; Michel Peridis, a lawyer; Jean Lallas, a journalist; Nicolas Zelitas, a merchant; George Petridis, an engineer and a chemist; Mme. Lalaouhi, a professor of singing; and the brothers Yanakakis, one a seller of sponges and the other an employee of the Bank of Athens.

[56]Note No. E. G. 110 (2) of 15 June 1921 on the "Activities of the Branch of the Third International at Alexandria" from the Director of G. S. "I" (General Staff Intelligence) to the Chancery of the British Residency, Ramleh, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[57]Alexandria Police Report of 10 August 1921 enclosed in letter No. B. 2 (23) of 29 August 1921 from the director general of public security to the Chancery of the British Residency, FO 141/779 File No. 9065.

[58]The principal Egyptian members of the party were Maḥmūd Ḥusnī al-ʻArābī, Fūād ash-Sharābī, Aḥmad al-ʻArābī, Luṭfī al-Barūdī, Shaʻbān Ḥāfiḍh, and Shaikh Ṣafwān Abū-l-Fat. The party included also Antūn Mārūn, a Syrian (Lebanese).

[59]*Al-Akhbār* (Beirut), 19 April 1970.

[60]Note of 22 June 1925 on the Communist movement in Egypt prepared for the First Secretary of the British Residency by the director general, Ministry of Interior, European Department, FO 141/779, File No. 9065. See also *The Times* (London) of 10 June 1924.

[61]Note B. 2 (17) of 21 July 1921 by the director general, Department of Public Security, Cairo, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[62]Public Security File No. 754, entitled "Joseph Rosenthal" and "Note on Rosenthal," FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[63]Letter No. 411 of 31 August 1919 from E. H. H. Allenby, the British Residency, Ramleh, to Earl Curzon of Kedleston, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[64]Summary of the Report that Comrade Eliava, member of the Central Committee of the (Russian) Communist party and of the Executive

Committee of the Moscow Soviet of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies, presented to the E.C.C.I. on 5 June 1921, FO 141/433, File No. 10770.

[65]Letter No. I 23025/D from G. S. "I," G. H. Q., E. E. F. to A. W. Keown Boyd, the British Residency, Ramleh, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[66]*Al-Ahālī*, 21 August 1919; and *Wādī-in-Nīl*, 20, 24, and 26 August 1919.

[67]Enclosure to letter No. 411 of 31 August 1919 from E. H. H. Allenby to Lord Curzon, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[68]Bolshevik Circular No. 73 signed "Al-Lijnat-ul-Musta 'jilah" or "The Provisional Committee" and entitled "O Egyptians! Embrace Bolshevism! Bolshevism! Islam, and Shaikh Bakhīt!" FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[69]Report of 26 August 1919 from "Agent Yūsef." FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[70]Report of 9 September 1919 by Sharīf Maḥmūd on the "Political Situation in Egypt and the Sudan," FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[71]Report enclosed in letter No. PC/R/126 of 21 February 1920 from the commandant, Cairo City Police to G.S.I., G.H.Q. E.E.F. (General Staff Intelligence, General Headquarters, Egyptian [?] Expeditionary Forces), FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[72]Report of 9 October 1919 from Major G. W. Courtney, G.S. "I" to the Chancery, the Residency, Ramleh, enclosed in letter No. 506 of 16 October 1919 from the Residency to Earl Curzon of Kedleston, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[73]British Intelligence note No. 18/110 of 20 March 1922 based on data provided by "an informant of the first order," FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[74]Note of 22 June 1925 from the director general, Ministry of Interior, European Department to the first secretary, the British Residency, FO 141/779, File No. 9065. See also *The Times* (London), 10 June 1924.

[75]Undated Communist document entitled "Theses on the Work of the Communist Parties in the Near East" and captured by the police in 1924, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

[76]"Rapport général sur la situation en Egypte presenté par le Parti Communiste Egyptien a l'executif de l'Internationale Communiste,"

enclosure to letter No. 971 of 26 September 1924 from the secretary of state for Foreign Affairs to the British Representative at Cairo, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

77Note of 22 June 1925 from the director general, Ministry of Interior, European Department, to the first secretary, the Residency, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

78Translation of letter of 18 March 1923 from Maḥmūd Ḥusnī al-‘Arābī to the E.C.C.I. The original was in French. FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

79Note of 21 May 1925 by the director, Criminal Investigation Department, Cairo; and note of 22 June 1925 by the director general, Ministry of Interior, European Department, Cairo, on the Communist movement in Egypt, FO 141/779, File No. 9065.

80Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins’) File No. 1831 on “Elie Teper.”

81Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins’) Files No. 2129 on “Alexis N. Vasilev” and No. 937 on “Dr. Tomanianz.”

82Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins’) File No. 2124 on “Hugo Rudolf.”

83Aṣ-Suhailah is in Kisirwān, to the northeast of Beirut.

84Conversation, Yūsuf Yazbek.

85*Al-Muqaṭṭam*, No. 10046 of 24 March 1922, p. 1; and No. 10086 of 11 May 1922, p. 1.

86Conversation, Yūsuf Yazbek.

87The term “Syria” then meant both Syria and Lebanon.

88Report delivered by Auerbach at a secret meeting of the Central Committee of the Palestine Communist party held in Tel Aviv on 8 March 1927. *Abstract of Intelligence*, para. 609 of 2 June 1927 refers.

89Conversation, Yūsuf Yazbek. For the activities of the Lebanese People’s party and for other details on early Lebanese communism, refer to S. Ayyūb, *Al-Ḥizb-ush-Shuyū‘ī fī Sūriyyah wa Lubnān (1922-1958)* (“The Communist Party in Syria and Lebanon. . .”), pp. 11-70. S. Ayyūb, whose real name is Sāmī Khūrī, is a physician and an ex-member of the Parti Populaire Syrien.

90Conversation, Yūsuf Yazbek.

[91]The text of this report was passed on to British Intelligence by one of its agents in the Palestine party. *Abstract of Intelligence* (Iraq), para. 609 of 2 June 1927 has reference.

[92]*Ibid*.

[93]See pp. 1149-1151.

[94]Haim Auerbach's secret report of 8 March 1927.

[95]Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins') File No. 1831 on "Elie Teper."

[96]The Profintern was the Red International of Trade Unions.

[97]Teper, born in Russia in 1893, was an agronomist by training.

[98]Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins') File No. 1831. Turkey, it must be remembered, was then a friend of Soviet Russia.

[99]Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins) File No. 1831 on "Elie Teper."

[100]*Ibid*.

12 Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥā l, aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah Group, and at-Taḍāmun Club

[1]Great Britain, the oriental secretary to the British high commissioner, Iraq, (Secret) *Intelligence Report* No. 15 of 24 July 1924, para. 514 and 514A.

[2]*Ibid*.

[3]See pp. 373-374.

[4]The biographical details in the account that follows are based, unless otherwise stated, on conversations with Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl and with Ḥusain Jamīl, a prominent leader of the National Democratic party.

[5]Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities, Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain)*, p. 43.

[6]See Chapter 9.

[7]From az-Zahāwī's fifth collection of poems, entitled *Ad-Diwān al-Khāmis: al-Awshāl* (Baghdād, n.d.), pp. 20 and 66.

[8]The first of az-Zahāwī's couplet cited above is cited approvingly in ar-Raḥḥāl's paper, *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah*, Year 1, No. 3 of 26 February 1925

[9]Jalāl Khālid is a fictitious name.

[10]*Jalāl Khālid* (Baghdād, 1928), pp. 2, 9-12, and 61. See also below pp. 401 ff.

[11]Conversation, Ḥusain ar-Raḥḥāl, April 1958.

[12]See p. 1137.

[13]Conversation, Arsen Kidour, April 1962.

[14]Actually the Extraordinary Commission (Cheka) had by this time given way to the State Political Administration (OGPU). For this body, see note 29, p. 1146.

[15]Iraqi Police File No. 1158 on "Arsen Kidour".

[16]Iraqi Police File No. 1690 on "Shaul Sultanian (alias Sultanov)."

[17]Iraqi Police File No. 1158.

[18]*Aṣ-Ṣahīfah,* Year 1, No. 6 of 20 March 1925, p. 6.

[19]Instead of the word "Bolshevism," only dots appeared when the poem was first published.

[20]Reference to the poem was made in Iraqi Police File No. 289 on "Jamīl Sidqī az-Zahāwī."

[21]The article was written in November 1924 in *Al-'Ālam al-'Arabī* (see Nos. 211-212 of 28 and 29 November 1924). But this paper was soon after denied to ar-Raḥḥāl and his group, who then founded *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah* and resumed their argument.

[22]For the specific claims made by ar-Raḥḥāl's circle on behalf of the Iraqi women, see *Aṣ-Ṣaḥīfah,* Year 1, No. 1 of 28 December 1924, pp. 4-6 and 10.

[23]*Aṣ-Ṣahīfah* of 28 December 1924, p. 9.

[24]Moslem holy law.

[25]*Ibid*., p. 9.

[26]*Ibid*., p. 13.

[27]*Aṣ-Ṣahīfah,* Year 1, No. 5 of 1 March 1925, p. 1.

[28]Sermons.

[29]Petitions.

[30]*Aṣ-Ṣahīfah,* No. 1-7 of 13 May 1927.

[31]Iraqi Police File No. 1342 on "Yūsuf Zainal."

[32]The text of the program is in Iraqi Police File entitled "Nādī at-Taḍāmun."

[33]*Ibid*.

[34]The youth educated in the modern schools.

[35]The source for the account that follows is Iraqi Police File No. 1819, entitled “Troubles on Anīs Nuṣūlī’s Book.”

[36]Conversations with Zakī Khairī, June 1958, and Mahdī Hāshim, February 1964.

[37]Iraqi Police File entitled “Nādī at-Taḍāmun.”

[38]Ar-Raḥḥāl was before the July Revolution of 1958 the secretary general of the Board of Management of the Iraqi Railways.

[39]*Jalāl Khālid*, p. 10.

[40]*Jalāl Khālid*, p. 12.

[41]*Ibid*., pp. 18-22.

[42]Conversation with this writer.

[43]Al-Kawākibī, *Umm al-Qura*, p. 23.

[44]Conversation, Zakī Khairī.

[45]See Table 14-2.

[46]Iraqi Police File No. 3067 on “‘Āṣim Flayyeḥ” and File entitled “Nādī at-Taḍāmun.”

[47]*Ibid*.

[48]See Table 19-1.

[49]Iraqi Police File No. 479 on “ ‘Abd-ul-Qāder Ismā‘īl.”

[50]For Yūsuf Ismā‘īl, see Table 14-2

13 Pyotr Vasili and the Baṣrah and Nāṣiriyyah Communist Circles

[1]The principal source for the observation that follow is Iraqi Police File No. 2652, entitled “Petros Vasili.”

[2]*Baṣrah C.I.D. Confidential Weekly Diary* No. 1 for Week Ending 7 January 1932.

[3]Great Britain, *Abstract of Intelligence (Iraq)*, XV, No. 21 of 27 May 1933, para. 466.

[4]See pp. 430-431.

[5]For Dūkā, Salmān, Zuwayyid, and al-Khaṭīb, see Table 14-2. For Dāūd Salmān, see Table 19-3.

[6]I found a copy of this statement in Police File No. 488 on Zakariyyah Eliās Dūkā. File No. 7687 on ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Khaṭīb did not contain the original.

[7]Iraqi Police File No. 937 on Dr. Tomaniantz.

[8]Iraqi Police File No. 7687 on ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Khaṭīb.

[9]For Fahd, see Chapter 18.

[10]Iraqi Police File entitled “Al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al-Lādīnī” (“The Anti-Religious Liberal Party”).

[11]The text of the Program is in Police File entitled “Al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al Lādīnī.”

[12]*Ibid*.

[13]See pp. 370-372.

[14]See p. 819.

[15]I am indebted for this couplet to ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain ‘Abd-ul-Karīm, member in 1958 of the Iraqi Cooperative Association for the Employees of Banks and Commercial Companies. ‘Abd-ul-Karīm recited it from memory.

[16]Memorandum dated July 1929 in Police File entitled “Al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al-Lādīnī.”

[17]Among the leading members of the society, apart from the Communists Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf, Dāūd Salmān, Ghālī Zuwayyid, and ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Khaṭīb, were ‘Abd-ul-Qādir aṣ-Sayyāb, an unemployed person, ‘Abd-ul-Zahra, a wireless operator; ‘Abd Muḥammad, a clerk at the railways; Ghulūm Bastakī, a librarian; Mahdī Waṣfī, a student at Baghdād’s Higher Teachers’ Training College; Ḥanna Balāya and Yūsuf Dāūd, clerks at the Baṣrah Port; George Stephan, a contractor; and Andrea ‘Īsa, a postal official. The last four persons, as well as Yūsuf and Dāūd Salmān, were Christians. All the rest were Moslems.

[18]*Kifāḥ-ush-Sha‘b* (“The Struggle of the People”), No. 2 of August 1935, pp. 6-7.

[19]See Chapter 34.

14 The Founding of the Iraqi Communist Party

[1]Great Britain, *Special Report. . . on the Progress of Iraq during the Period 1920-1931* (London, 1931), p. 213.

[2]*Ibid*., pp. 97-98.

[3]*Ibid*., pp. 245-246.

[4]Iraq, (Restricted) *Administrative Report of the Iraqi Police for 1930*, pp. 7-8.

[5]*Kifāh-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī* (an internal journal of the Iraqi Communist party's Prison Organization), No. 14 of 14 February 1954, p. 7.

[6]Chiefs-of-chiefs.

[7]The Communist University of the Toilers of the East. Al-Khaṭīb attended KUTV from 1930 to 1932. Entry dated 6 February 1932 in his Police File No. 7687 has reference. Al-Khaṭīb did not return to Iraq, however, until November 1933.

[8]For sources, see Table 14-2.

[9]ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ attended KUTV from 1931 to 1934; Iraqi Police File No. 3067.

[10]Conversation with Mahdī Hāshim in February 1964.

[11]The description on this and the following pages is based, unless otherwise indicated, on conversations with Zakī Khairī, Mahdī Hāshim, Qāsim Ḥasan, Jamīl Tūma, Nūrī Rūfā'īl, and ʻAbdallah Ismāʻīl; and on Police Files No. 2550, 8083, 414, 479, 3067, 487, 7687, 340, 1158, 2652, 3076, 367, 3546, 333, and 272.

[12]See p. 403.

[13]Letter of 17 February 1932 from Major J. F. Wilkins to Captain V. Holt in Iraqi Police File No. 908.

[14]Entry dated 27 April 1929 in Iraqi Police File No. 487 on "Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf.

[15]Actually his workers were members of his own extended family.

[16]Entry dated 7 January 1934 in Iraqi Police File No. 3067 on " ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ."

[17]Iraqi Police Files No. 488 (Dūka), 272 (Ḥasan), 333 (Tūma), 367 (Rūfāʻīl), 414 (Khairī).

[18]All except Qāsim Ḥasan lost their positions in 1935. Ḥasan was connected with ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Khaṭīb of the Baṣrah circle as early as 1929, and lost his clerkship at the Ministry of Finance in 1930.

[19]He related the anecdote to this writer in June 1958.

[20]Of Group 1; see Table 14-2 under “Baghdād circles.”

[21]Man of religion of the itinerant type.

[22]*Mardam* No. 9 of January 4, 1946. The text of the article was enclosed in a letter dated 31 January 1946 from the Iraqi chargé d’Affaires, Teheran, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

[23]Conversation with writer in February 1964.

[24]Haim Auerbach’s secret report of 8 March 1927. Great Britain, *Abstract of Intelligence (Iraq)*, para. 609 of 2 June 1927 has reference.

[25]See pp. 412-413.

[26]Conversation of Tūma and Rūfā’īl with this writer in June 1958.

[27]A district in the province of Kūt.

[28]Now in Turkey.

[29]Conversation with Jamīl Tūma, June 1958.

[30]Conversation with Qāsim Ḥasan, May 1958.

[31]Entry dated 14 October 1935 in Iraqi Police File No. 272 on “Qāsim Ḥasan.”

[32]Undated entry in Iraqi Police File No. 340 on “Ghālī Zuwayyid.”

[33]For Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf see also Chapter 18.

[34]Iraq, *Abstract of Intelligence*, para. 1058 of 14 December 1932 has reference.

[35]For the significance of this watchword, see pp. 819-820.

[36]Iraqi Police File No. 487 on “Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf.”

[37]Conversation with Jamīl Tūma, June 1958.

[38]See pp. 297 and 404.

[39]Entry of that date in Iraqi Police File No. 7687 on ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd al-Khaṭīb.

[40]Consult Table 14-2.

[41]*Special Police Report* No. SB 1535 of 27 December 1933; and *Abstract of Intelligence*, para. 1286 of same date.

[42]Unfortunately I was not able to trace this statement. The British "technical adviser" of the director general of investigations asked for it on 29 October 1944 and did not, it appears, return it to the files.

[43]For Flayyeḥ, consult Table 14-2.

[44]Flayyeḥ had left Baghdād for Beirut on 20 April 1931, and embarked at Beirut on 1 June 1931 with the Lebanese Communist Muhyī-d-Dīn Kūsa en route to Moscow via Vienna and Berlin. Iraqi Police File No. 3067 on " ʻĀṣim Flayyeḥ" has reference.

[45]For these persons, consult Table 14-2.

[46]The Communists of Iraq date the birth of their party from the time of the founding of this illegal association but, having been cut off from their past by the loss of their records, they appear to be under a misapprehension as to when the association actually came into being. In fact, Communist sources have not been consistent in this regard. On frequent occasions, March 31, 1934, was cited by authoritative Iraqi Communists as the date of the foundation of the party (e.g., *Al-Qā'idah* No. 3 of 1 May 1954; *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī* No. 19 of 23 April 1954; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb* No. 57 of 1 April 1960). In one instance, the official party organ *(Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb* of 20 February 1959) gave the year 1932, and in another instance, an old-timer and a member of the Central Committee in the late fifties–Zakī Khairī–affirmed that the Association Against Imperialism was formed in April 1934, adding that the name "The Iraqi Communist Party" appeared in full for the first time in July 1935, while the first Communist cell was organized around 1932. *(Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb* of January 26, 1960) Russian sources add to the confusion, for the *Soviet Encyclopedia* in its edition of 1953 (Volumes 18 and 22, pp. 256 and 391, respectively) gave 1932 as the year of the birth of the party, whereas *Revoliutsionnyi Vostok* (No 6 [28] of 1934, p. 84) maintained in June 1934 that the Iraqi labour movement had "not yet put forward its own Communist vanguard–its Communist party." In the present account it has been shown already and beyond dispute that the first "Marxist" study circle developed in Baghdād in 1924 (see p. 393); that the first Communist cell, properly so called, was organized in Baṣrah in 1927 (see p. 405); and that the first placard carrying the symbol of the hammer and sickle appeared in Nāṣiriyyah in 1932, but bore simply the

signature “A Communist Worker” (see p. 428). As to the Association Against Imperialism, it should be pointed out that ‘Āṣim Flayyeḥ, one of its founders, returned from Moscow only on 18 August 1934 (Iraqi Police File No. 3067) and that Qāsim Ḥasan, a cofounder, was released from detention in Nāṣiriyyah on 24 January 1935 (Iraqi Police File No. 272). From all this, it becomes evident that the association could not have been formed in March or April of the preceding year. It is correct, on the other hand, as will be shown in due course, that the name “The Iraqi Communist Party” appeared for the first time in July 1935.

47That of 1920.

15 Two Iraqis–Three Sects

1For Khairī, consult Table 14-2.

2Contrary to Communist accounts of later decades, Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf, the most prominent southern Communist, shared neither in the founding of the association nor in any of its activities: he had left Iraq for KUTV, Moscow, on February 3, 1935, i.e., before the association came to life, and returned to Baghdād on January 30, 1938, long after it had ceased to exist.

3Secretary general of the Syrian Communist party.

4Cited in letter of 6 May 1937 from the Syrian Communist Izzud-Dīn Ṣaṭi‘ to ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl. Iraqi Police File No. 3076 refers.

5Entry dated 7 January 1934 in Iraqi Police File No. 3067 on “ ‘Āṣim Flayyeḥ.”

6Jamīl Tūma.

7Qāsim Ḥasan.

8In June 1958.

9The sixth founding member, Ḥasan ‘Abbas al-Karbās, was arrested on 11 March 1935.

10For Khairī and Mattī, consult Table 14-2.

11Qāsim Ḥasan left Iraq on 20 June and returned from Moscow at the end of October 1935. Iraqi Police File No. 272.

[12]The preceding account is based on conversations with Qāsim Ḥasan, Mahdī Hāshim, Zakī Khairī, Jamīl Tūma, Nūrī Rūfā'īl, and ʻAbdallah Ismāʻīl, and on Iraqi Police Files No. 2550 (Ḥasan ʻAbbās al-Karbās), 414 (Khairī), 3067 (Flayyeḥ), 487 (Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf), 3076 (Yūsuf Ismāʻīl), 367 (Rūfāʻīl), 272 (Qāsim Ḥasan), and 333 (Tūma).

[13]Al-Hāshimī was prime minister from 17 March 1935 to 29 October 1936.

[14]The paper was produced in the cellars of the Railway Hospital in al-Karkh, Baghdād.

[15]*Kifāḥ-ush-Shaʻb*, No. 1 of July 1935, pp. 2-7.

[16]At only one other point in its history did the Communist party go so far in supporting the Kurdish cause: in the program that it adopted in March 1953, the party admitted "the right of self-determination, including that of secession, for the Kurdish people," *Al-Qāʻidah*, Year 11, No. 2 of middle March 1953.

[17]*ʻKifāḥ-ush-Shaʻb*, No. 3 of August 1935, p. 11.

[18]See pp. 432-433.

[19]*Kifāḥ-ush-Shaʻb*, No. 3 of August 1935, p. 1.

[20]*Kifāḥ-ush-Shaʻb*, No. 3 of August 1935, p. 8.

[21]*Ṣūfīs:* Moslem ascetic mystics.

[22]*Kifāḥ-ush-Shaʻb*, No. 2 of August 1935, pp. 6-7.

[23]Iraqi Police File No. 272 on "Qāsim Ḥasan."

16 Beginning again; or the Communists in the Period of the Coups d'Etat (1936-1941

[1]Consult Table 14-2.

[2]*Ibid*.

[3]Walter Laqueur's assertion in *Communism and Nationalism in the Middle East* (New York, 1956), p. 178, to the effect that Communist leaders "first opposed the new government and not until the Comintern had given the green light [in January-February 1937] did they come out in support of it" is without foundation.

[4]See Table 14-2.

[5]*Al-Ahālī* of 6 November 1936.

[6]Conversation, Zakī Khairī, June 1958.

[7]The paper was under complete Communist control.

[8]The founding members of the association were Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, minister of economy and public works; Yūsuf Izz-ud-Dīn Ibrahīm, minister of education; ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl, editor of *Al-Ahalī (for* Ismā‘īl see also Table 14-2); Makkī Jamīl, editor of *Al-Ḥāris*, a paper with leanings similar to those of *Al-Ahālī;* Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Qazzāz, labor union leader; and the lawyer Ṣādiq Kammūnah. Iraqi Police File No. J 57, entitled “Jam‘iyyat al-lslāḥ ash-Sha‘bī” refers.

[9]The National Bloc in Syria and the Arab Higher Committee in Palestine.

[10]Program of the Association of the People’s Reform, Articles 2b, 3a, 3d, and 6.

[11]For Yūsuf Ismā‘īl, see Table 14-2.

[12]Yūsuf Ismā‘īl, *Inqilāb Tis‘a wa ‘ishrīn Tishrīn-il-Awwal* (“The Coup of 29 October”) (Baghdād, 1936), pp. 53-55.

[13]See statement of ‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd in *Al-Ahālī*, No. 450 of 29 November 1936.

[14]*Revoliutsionnyi Vostok*, No 1(41) of 1937, p. 88.

[15]Article 3, Para. c and g of their program.

[16]*Revoliutsionnyi Vostok*, No 1(41) of 1937, p. 89.

[17]*Ibid*., p. 91.

[18]*Ash-Sharārah* (“The Spark”), No. 15 of August 1942, maintained that the association marked “the opening of the activities of the Iraqi Mensheviks.”

[19]Yūsuf Ismā‘īl, *Inqilāb*, pp. 33-42 and 71.

[20]raqi Police File No. J 57.

[21]*Al-Bilād*, Year 8, No. 821 of 18 March 1937.

[22]Iraqi Police File No. J 57, entries dated 18, 19, and 24 March 1937.

[23]Iraqi Police File No. 846 on “Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-Qazzāz” (labor union leader), entry dated April 1937; *Al-Bilād*, Year 8, No. 836 of 6 April 1937; unpublished Communist manuscript entitled “For Imposing

Militant Unions after a Quarter of a Century of Labor Union History" (in Arabic), pp. 20-26; and Stephen Longrigg, *Iraq 1900 to 1950*, p. 252.

[24]Statement to this writer by ʻAbdallah Masʻūd, who helped to organize the strike at the Baṣrah Port.

[25]Great Britain, Department of Overseas Trade, *Economic Conditions in Iraq, 1933-1935* (London, 1936), p. 30.

[26]Conversation with ʻAbdallah Masʻūd, prominent ex-Communist from Baṣrah.

[27]A collaborator of Khairī–Yūsuf Mattī–was seen by police agents flitting about among labor leaders in Baghdād exhorting them to strike. Iraqi Police File No. 846 has reference.

[28]Iraqi Police File No. 846, entry dated 8 April 1937; and File No. J 57, entry dated 12 July 1937.

[29]Iraqi Police File No. 846.

[30]Iraqi Police File No. 3076; and Paris letter from Yūsuf Ismāʻīl to his companion, Nūrī Rūfāʻīl, dated 12 October 1937, in File No. 367.

[31]Iraqi Police File No. J 57.

[32]Articles prejudicial to Bakr Ṣidqī were published in Lebanese newspapers. Ismāʻīl was suspected of being the author, whereas in fact the articles were written by Taḥsīn al-ʻAskarī, brother-in-law of Nūrī aṣ-Saʻīd.

[33]For Khairī, consult Table 14-2.

[34]Till November 1935, when Khairī fell into the clutches of the police, political work in the army was carried on by Khairī and Mattī; and thereafter–and until his release from prison in October 1936–by Mattī and Mahdī Hāshim. Source: letter from chief of C.I.D. to minister of interior, 17 January 1938, in Iraqi Police File No. 333.

[35]Unpublished internal Communist manuscript entitled *The Iraqi Army* (in Arabic), pp. 54-55.

[36]Battalion is here rendered for *fawj*.

[37]"The Garden of the Infidels," which is situated between the town of Kirkūk and the oil fields.

[38]Report from director general of C.I.D. to minister of interior, 17 January 1938 in Iraqi Police File No. 333.

[39]Communist manuscript entitled “The Iraqi Army,” pp. 55-56.

[40]The sentences were passed on 6 March 1938. Iraqi Police File No. 414 on “Zakī Khairī” has reference. The spread of revolutionary ideas to the army alarmed the government and impelled it to add on 1 May 1938 a special article-Article 89a–to the Baghdad Penal Law, which declared adherence to communism a criminal offense and threatened anyone upholding or spreading this doctrine among the troops or the police with death, or hard labor for life, or prison for a period not exceeding 15 years. Similar activities among civilians incurred milder penalties.

[41]The idea of enlisting in the International Brigade was suggested to Nūrī Rūfā‘īl by Yūsuf Ismā‘īl in a letter dated 12 October 1937; Iraqi Police File No. 367.

[42]Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn aṣ-Ṣabbāgh, Kāmil Shabīb, Maḥmūd Salmān, and Fahmī Sa‘īd, commanders of the Third Division, the First Division, the Air force, and the mechanized troops, respectively.

[43]The biographical and other details that follow were obtained, unless otherwise stated, from Mas‘ūd himself and from his collaborator, Wadī‘ Ṭalyah.

[44]For Zuwayyid, see Table 14-2.

[45]Niqūlā al-Ḥaddād, *Al-Ishtirākiyyah* (Cairo, 1920), pp. 45-46, 80, 88.

[46]Entry of that date in Iraqi Police File No. 487 on “Yūsuf Salmān Yūsuf.”

[47]Yūsuf was not for long in any one locality. For a while he would be in Nāṣiriyyah with his brother Dāūd, and then would move to Baṣrah, where his brother Faraj lived. Occasionally and for brief periods he sojourned in Baghdād.

[48]For Khairī, see Table 14-2.

[49]Conversation with Mas‘ūd and aṣ-Ṣaffār and the statement of the latter to the police on 8 February 1943 in Iraqi Police File No. 31/43. Aṣ-Ṣaffār was born in Baghdād in 1917, the son of a brass founder, and had had a secondary education. File No. 1562 refers.

[50]Statement of ‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd to this writer in October 1957.

[51]The watchwords of the following issues of *Ash-Sharārah* were as shown below:

February 1941:	“But the scum is thrown off and that which is useful to mankind remaineth on earth” (13:16).
September 1941:	“And they who act unjustly shall know hereafter how they shall be overturned” (26:227).

[52]In this connection, however, Jewish communists should be placed in a category of their own, given the peculiar conditions of their coreligionists in Iraq and abroad.

[53]*Ash-Sharārah* No. 3 of February 1941, pp. 3-4. It is of interest that the idea of an “Arab alliance for collective defence” does not appear in the proclamations of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon relating to this period, although these proclamations call for “the solidarity of the Arab peoples against war and imperialism.” Otherwise Iraqi and Syrian statements correspond. See *Niḍāl-ush-Sha‘b* (“The Struggle of the People”) (organ of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon), No. 8 of August 1940, p. 8, and No. 15 of March 1941, pp. 6-7.

[54]See note 42 above.

[55]Conversation with Wadī‘ Ṭalyah, then a member of the Central Committee.

[56]Only repetitive phrases that do not add or detract from the meaning of the letter have been omitted. The letter was published shortly after the collapse of the Rashīd ‘Ālī movement in issue No. 6-7 of May-June 1941 of *Ash-Sharārah*, pp. 12-14. In February 1964 the author reread the text of the letter to Rashīd ‘Ālī, who confirmed having received it.

[57]*Izvestiya*, 13 May 1941.

[58]Conversation with Rashīd ‘Ālī.

[59]*Pravda*, 18 May 1941.

[60]*Pravda*, 18 May 1941, article by N. Sergeev.

[61]Laqueur, *Communism and Nationalism*, p. 182.

[62]Max Beloff, *The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia (1929-1941)*, II (London, 1949), 379.

[63]For this item I am indebted to Ṣiddīq Shanshal, director of propaganda under the Rashīd ‘Ālī regime and a brother-in-law of as-Sab‘āwī. Shanshal joined the group in 1935.

[64]Mrs. Ṣabāḥ as-Sa‘īd, daughter-in-law of Nūrī as-Sa‘īd and daughter of ‘Alī Pasha Fahmī, an ex-Egyptian senator and landowner, conversation with this writer in London, January 1962.

[65]Conversation, Qāsim Ḥasan.

[66]The committee included among others Colonel aṣ-Ṣabbāgh and the mufti. There is some question as to whether Rashīd ‘Ālī belonged to the committee.

[67]For Qāsim Ḥasan, see Table 14-2.

[68]Ḥasan for one term only.

[69]Ḥamīd was also a supporter, if not a member, of the Communist party in the early forties. Iraqi Police File No. 2/42, entries dated March 1942 refer.

[70]Conversation, Qāsim Ḥasan. Earlier in 1936, Sab‘āwī, backed by Yāsīn al-Hāshimī, then prime minister, used the tribe of Shammar for the same purposes.

[71]Conversation, ‘Azīz Sharīf.

[72]Conversation, ‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd, then member of the Central Committee of the Communist party. For Mas‘ūd, see Table 16-1.

[73]Conversations, Qāsim Ḥasan and Ṣiddīq Shanshal in 1957.

[74]To this writer in 1957.

[75]And in 1943 paid him 500 rubles a month for teaching Arabic to Soviet students.

[76]For Khairī, see Table 14-2.

[77]Internal Party Circular No. 120 of December 1935 in Iraqi Police File No. 272 on “Qāsim Ḥasan.” Earlier, in July 1935, when Bakdāsh and Ḥasan were in Moscow attending the Seventh Comintern Congress, Bakdāsh complained of Ḥasan’s fondness for luxury, and doubted whether he would ever make a good revolutionary.

[78]Iraqi Police File No. 272.

[79]*Ash-Sharārah*, Nos. 6-7 of May-June 1941, pp. 3-7.

[80]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 5 of June 1943, p. 5.

[81]“The Report of Comrade Fahd at the Party Conference” in *Qaḍiyyatuna-l-Waṭaniyyah* (“Our National Cause”) (Baghdād, 1945), p. 39.

[82]E.g., *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 3 of April 1953.

17 Of the General Causes That Made for the Increase of Communism in the Two Decades before the July Revolution

[1]The largest *legal* organization in Iraq–the National Democratic party-counted in April 1947 6,961 members (see p. 592). The Iraqi Communist party (Fahd's organization) embraced in that year, according to a reliable estimate (see p. 642) from 3,000 to 4,000 "members," but a much greater number of "organized" and "unorganized supporters" (see p. 639). In addition, the "nationalist today, Communist to-morrow" People's party of Azīz Sharīf totaled about 2,171 members (see p. 592), and the Marxist-oriented National Union party of Fattāḥ Ibrahīm, at least 500 members (see p. 305). In any comparison of strength, account must also be taken of the fact that many of the rank and file of the National Democratic party owed real loyalty to the Communist leadership.

[2]From a memorandum on "Communism in Iraq" prepared by the Director, C.I.D. and forwarded to P. B. Ray Esq. c/o A.H.Q. Detachment, R.A.F. Baghdād, British Forces in Iraq, pp. 2-3. Perhaps the figure of 50 percent is exaggerated, but there can be no question that the influence of Communist ideas was in the forties widespread among youth.

[3]The guiding hand of the Communists was evident in the Sulaimāniyyah, ‘Amārah, and Kūt peasant uprisings, and that of the National Democrats in the Diwāniyyah unrest.

[4]See also pp. 351-352.

[5]For the *Wathbah*, see Chapter 22.

[6]For the *Intfāḍah*, see Chapter 30.

[7]Great Britain, *Iraq, Review of Commercial Conditions* (London, February 1945), p. 13.

[8]For the growth of the population of Baghdād, see Table 2-2.

[9]Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1949*, p. 201.

[10]Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1953*, p. 197.

[11]For the 1939 figure (286,608 tons) see *Statistical Abstract 1943*, p. 147.

[12]This is suggested by the Ministry of Agriculture's estimates of the yields of the principal crops, and in particular of barley, the principal item of export, for the years 1942-1952. See *Statistical Abstracts 1949* and *1953*, pp. 116-117 and 109-111, respectively. No figures for the period 1939-1941 are available.

[13]Great Britain, Overseas Economic Surveys, *Iraq* (July 1953), p. 26.

[14]Iraq, Ministry of Economics, Principal Bureau of Statistics, *Report on the Household Budget Enquiry in the City of Baghdad and its Environs* (1954), p. 18.

[15]For the great peasant migrations, their causes and their effects, see pp. 132 ff.

[16]According to Fahd, the secretary general of the Communist party (see *Al-Qā'idah*, Year 2, No. 3 of March 1944) who was, as a rule, excellently informed on matters relating to labor, 60,000 to 70,000 workers were in the employ of British forces in 1943.

[17]Compare Table 17-4 with wholesale price index in Table 17-3.

[18]1 dīnār = £1.

[19]See Table 17-3.

[20]1,000 fils = 1 dīnār.

[21]Letters dated 12 January and 5 May 1943 in Iraqi Police File No. 1111 entitled "Ṭaha al-Hāshimī."

[22]Iraqi Police File No. J/556 refers.

[23]Iraqi Police File No. 1747, entitled "Rashīd 'Ālī al-Gailānī."

[24]Report from the director, C.I.D., to the minister of interior, dated 12 March 1946 and entitled "Survey of the Situation of the Communists in Iraq as of the 1st March 1946," p. 4.

[25]In fact, on 13 May 1943, the authorities launched a general search for Communists. Subsequently, however, the pressure on them eased.

[26]Actually at least three out of the six members of the first Central Committee of the People's party were Communists, and one had served on the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist party from 1940 to 1942; see Chap. 24, n. 68.

[27]Letter from the technical adviser to the director, C.I.D. No. TA/410/50/601 of 24 March 1946, in Iraqi Police File entitled "The

People’s Party.”

[28]The Iraqi branch of the Ba‘th party was founded in 1952 and acquired significance only after 1958.

[29]Conversation with ‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd in May 1958. For the latter see Table 16-1. For the injunction, see 16:71 in the Qur’ān.

[30]See Table 17-5.

[31]Computation based on figures provided by Great Britain, *Report ... on the Administration of Iraq for 1926*, p. 28; *The Iraqi Official Guidebook for 1936* (in Arabic), p. 772; *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī* (The Struggle of the Revolutionary Prisoner), No. 6 of 16 December 1953, p. 12, Iraq, *Report on the Industrial Census of Iraq, 1954*, p. 21, and Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstract 1956*, pp. 142 and 193.

[32]Iraq, *Report on the Industrial Census of Iraq, 1954, passim*.

[33]*Ibid*., pp. 21 and 211.

[34]Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Report on the Housing Census of Iraq for 1956*, p. 15.

[35]Iraq, Ministry of Finance, *Budget of the Iraq Government for the Financial Year 1938*, Consolidated Statement Q, p. 14; and Iraq, *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 14122 of 29 March 1958, Schedule “Q” of General Budget Law for the Financial Year 1958.

18 Fahd

[1]Consult Chapter 17.

[2]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīm ath-Thawrī*, No. 14 of 14 February 1954.

[3]In June 1958.

[4]Conversations with ‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd, Jamīl Tūma, Dāūd Ṣāyegh, Sālim ‘Ubaid an-Nu‘mān, etc.

[5]Conversation with this writer, June 1958.

[6]See, e.g., p. 500.

[7]The letter–dated 1944–was intercepted by the police and quoted by the director of criminal investigations in his report to the minister of

interior of 12 March 1946, entitled “Survey of the Situation of the Communists in Iraq as of the 1st March 1946,” p. 6.

[8]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 15 of August 1942, p. J.

[9]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 16 of 3 March 1954, pp. 9-10.

[10]Iraqi Police File No. 487.

[11]Barṭallah, according to Zakī Khairī; al-Qosh, according to Jamīl Tūma. For Khairī and Tūma see Table 14-2.

[12]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 15 of 20 February 1954, p. 8.

[13]*Ibid*., No. 14 of 14 February 1954, p. 16.

[14]Great Britain, *Abstract of Intelligence, (Iraq)*, para. 1058 of 1932, Appendix ‘A.’

[15]He too was born in 1901.

[16]To this writer in June 1958.

[17]Or, more officially, the director general of criminal investigations.

[18]Iraqi Police File No. 487.

[19]Iraq, *Administration Report of the Nāṣiriyyah Division for the Year 1919*, p. 92.

[20]In a statement to the police dated 18 January 1947, which is in the Iraqi Police File entitled “Case No. 4/47.”

[21]See, for example, *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 14 of 14 February 1954.

[22]His application dated 3 April 1929 in Iraqi Police File No. 487 refers.

[23]Nāṣiriyyah police officer’s letter of 10 September 1931 in Iraqi Police File No. 487 has reference.

[24]His statement to the police dated 18 January 1947 in Iraqi Police File entitled “Case No. 4/47.”

[25]The treaty permitted British forces to maintain air bases in time of peace and to enjoy manifold facilities in time of war.

[26]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* of 20 February 1959 affirms that Fahd led the demonstrations in Nāṣiriyyah and then, eluding the police, slipped to Baṣrah, where his role was also significant. The paper adds that Ḥasan ‘Ayyāsh, one of the Baṣrite agitators, who was subsequently executed by the authorities, was a friend of Fahd.

[27]See ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt-il-Irāqiyyah*, III, 133-144; and Stephen Longrigg, *Iraq, 1900 to 1950*, pp. 184-185.

[28]Letter of 30 August 1931 from the Palestine C.I.D. (Criminal Investigations Department) to the Iraqi C.I.D. in Iraqi Police File No. 487.

[29]Entry dated 8 March 1933, *ibid*.

[30]Entry dated 10 August 1929 in Iraqi Police File entitled “Al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al-Lādīnī” (The Anti-Religious Liberal Party).

[31]Entry dated 6 June 1935 in Iraqi Police File No. 487.

[32]Entry which was undated, but from context appears to have been written in or after 1938; Iraqi Police File No. 487.

[33]He stayed for a time in Syria, Italy, and France.

[34]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 14 of 14 February 1954, pp. 7-8.

[35]Iraqi Police File No. 487.

[36]*Ibid*.

19 Toward a Tightly Knit, Ideologically Homogeneous Party

[1]For Wadī Ṭalyah, see Table 16-1.

[2]To this writer in February 1964.

[3]For ‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd, see Table 16-1.

[4]Consult accompanying Table 19-1.

[5]An urban district in Greater Baghdād.

[6]Dāūd Ṣāyegh confirmed to this writer in November 1957 that he was appointed to the Central Committee on the day of his admission to the party.

[7]Wadī‘ Ṭalyah and Dāūd Ṣāyegh were the only other Christians present.

[8]The first edition of *Dr. Ibrahīm* appeared in 1939.

[9]For example, the peroration of his principal work, *Dr. Ibrahīm*, was perfectly within that tradition.

[10]“Comrade Fāḍil” in party literature.

[11]The court consisted of Fahd, “Riyāḍ” (‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd), “Ṣāliḥ” (Ṣafā’u-d-Dīn Muṣṭafa), and “Qādir” (Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb). It appears from subsequent development that Zhū Nūrī was not in sympathy with the decision of the court, but *Ash-Sharārah* made no reference to this at the time.

[12]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 13 of July 1942, p. 12.

[13]*Ash-Sharārah* named only one organizer, “Comrade Maḥmūd” (Yūsuf Harūn Zilkha, a Jewish railway employee). But there were others, such as ‘Abd-ul-Malik ‘Abd-ul-Latīf Nūrī , a Moslem writer, and George Tallu, a Christian engineering student, who later rejoined the party and became in the late fifties a member of the Politbureau.

[14]Actually, the faction succeeded at first in attracting another member of the Central Committee, Amīnah ar-Raḥḥāl (“Comrade Faṭimah”), but Fahd quickly won her back.

[15]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 15 of August 1942, pp. A-B.

[16]*Forward* (or *Vperyod)* is the name of a paper founded by Lenin in 1904. *Ash-Sharārah*, it should also be remembered, is the Arabic word for *Iskra*.

[17]Zhū Nūrī and his associates did not particularize, but they actually were referring to Fahd.

[18]*Il-al-Amām*, No. 1 of 7 November 1942, p. 1.

[19]The reference is to the partisans of the Rashīd ‘Ālī movement.

[20]Source: Dāūd Ṣāyegh in an interview with this writer in October 1957. The petition was delivered to the embassy by his mother.

[21]Consult Tables 16-1 and 19-1.

[22]*Ibid*.

[23]Sources for above and for what follows, unless otherwise stated: ‘Abdallah Mas‘ūd, Wadī‘ Ṭalyah, Dāūd Ṣāyegh; *Ash-Sharārah*, No. 21 of December 1942; *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 1 of January 1943; Internal Party Bulletin issued by Fahd and dated May 1943; and Fahd, *Ḥizb Shuyū‘ī Lā Ishtirākiyyah Dimuqrāṭiy-yah (“* A Communist Party Not a Democratic Socialism”) (1944).

[24]For Mahdī Hāshim, see Table 14-2.

[25]Report by Agent M carrying no date, but written in late 1942 or early 1943 in Iraqi Police File No. 487.

[26]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 21 of December 1942.

[27]Apart from Mas‘ūd, Fahd, Ṣafā’u-d-Dīn Muṣṭafa, and Ṭalyah, Mas‘ūd’s Central Committee included Ḥamīd Hindī, a mechanic, and ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Abd-ur-Razzāq, a school teacher (See Table 19-3), both Sunnī Moslems. The Jewish members were Yūsuf Mukammal, an employee of a tobacco company and a cousin of Ya‘qūb Cohen; Ibrahīm Nāji Shmayyel, an apothecary; and three shoemakers, of whom Mas‘ūd could remember (in 1958) only Ibrahīm Zhīb.

[28]Fahd, *A Communist Party Not a Democratic Socialism* (in Arabic), p. 7.

[29]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 15 of 20 February 1954, p. 8.

[30]The first number of *Al-Qā‘idah* carried, however, the date January 1943.

[31]*Il-Al-Amām*, No. 3 of January 1943, pp. 47-48.

[32]Entry written in January 1943 in Iraqi Police File No. 487.

[33]*Internal Bulletin Issued in Pursuance of a Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party* (May 1943) (in Arabic), pp. 1-2.

[34]Mas‘ūd told this writer in 1957 that in the message that Fahd sent with Amīnah ar-Raḥḥāl before his departure from Iraq he wrote that he would abide by any decision that the Central Committee would see fit to take.

[35]The statement of 24 November 1942, see p. 501.

[36]Iraqi Police File entitled *Case No. 31/43*.

[37]Iraqi Police File entitled *Case No. 2/42*.

[38]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 14 of .14 February 1954.

[39]From “A Statement to the Comrade-in-Arms” published on 16 June 1943.

[40]*Ash-Sharārah*, Year 3, No. 10 of June 1943, p. 3. The decree was, of course, formally issued by the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

[41]Text of their letter in *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 4 of June 1943, p. 7.

[42]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 4 of June 1943, pp. 4-6.

[43]Fahd began working on this essay in December 1943, and published it on February 15, 1944.

[44]Fahd, *Ḥizb Shuyū‘ī Lā Ishtirākiyyah Dimuqrāṭiyyah*, p. 10.

[45]*Ibid*., p. 11.

[46]It would have been more appropriate for Fahd to refer to the underground phase in the experience of the Bolsheviks, when their party was organized on a purely centralist principle, in fact and in theory.

[47]*Ḥizb Shuyū‘ī Lā Ishtirākiyyah Dimuqrāṭiyyah*, pp. 2-10.

[48]Rābiṭat-ush-Shuyū‘iyyīn-il-Irāqiyyīn.

[49]Consult Table 19-1.

[50]Interview with this writer in October 1957.

[51]Undated report in Iraqi Police File No. 3/1947.

[52]“Action” or “Labor.”

[53]*al-‘Amal*, No. 1 of April 1944. See also No. 3 of December 1944.

[54]*al-‘Amal*, No. 4 of February 1945, p. 3.

[55]The number of its actual followers was probably in the few hundreds: it was strong in Mosul, where Fahd had almost no adherents.

[56]The other officers were Captains Ghadbān Ḥardān as-Sa‘d, ‘Abd-ul-Qādir-il-Lāh Wairdī, and Lieutenants Ḥusain ad-Dūrī, ‘Āid Kāti‘ al-‘Awādī, and Mahdī Ṣāliḥ Drai‘ī. The occupation of the other members was as follows: students, 8; workers, 9; lawyers, 2; schoolteachers, 2; shopkeepers, 3; government employees, 4; craftsmen, 2; unemployed, 3; soldiers and noncommissioned officers, 2. Of the 42, 35 were Moslem Arabs, 3 Moslem Kurds, 3 Christians, and 1 Sabean. The Central Committee in 1945-1946 consisted of Ṣāyegh; ‘Abd-ul-Amīr ‘Abbās, a mechanic; Akram Ḥusain, keeper of a bookshop; Kādhim Ḥamādah, a schoolteacher; and Khala Yūsuf, a craftsman. Ṣādiq Ja‘far al-Falāḥī, a textile worker who later became a member of the Central Committee of the C.P. of Iraq (see Table 29-1) belonged to this organization. Iraqi Police File entitled *Case No. 3/47* refers.

[57]See, e.g., Fahd, *Ḥizb Shuyū‘ī*, pp. 12-13.

[58]Fahd, *Ḥizb Shuyū‘ī*, p. 27; and *Al-Qā‘idah* of October 1943, p. 7.

[59]Consult Table 19-1.

[60]Basīm's statement of 18 January 1947 in Iraqi Police File entitled *Case No. 4/1947* and File No. 487.

[61]Sources, among others: Basīm's Police File No. 3347; Fahd's Police File No. 487; File entitled *Case No. 4/1947, Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* of 20 February 1959; conversations of writer with Dāūd Ṣāyegh (see Table 19-1) in October 1957; with Mālik Saif (see Table 19-3) in October 1957 and February 1964; and with Sālim 'Ubaid an-Nu'mān in February 1964.

[62]Consult Table A-1.

[63]Consult Table 19-2.

[64]File No. 487 and File entitled *Case No. 4/1947;* and conversations–among others–with Sālim 'Ubaid an-Nu'mān.

[65]Consult Table 19-1.

[66]File entitled *Case No. 4/1947*.

[67]See pp. 465 ff.

[68]Fahd's report at the First Party Congress entitled "Strengthen the Organization of Your Party. Strengthen the Organization of the National Movement" in *Al-Qā'idah*, Year 3, No. 15 of March 1945. See also *Al-Qā'idah*, Year 2, No. 3 of March 1944.

[69]For the Central Committee in March 1944, see Table 19-2.

[70]*Shursh* ("Revolution") was the organ of the "Communist Party in Iraqi Kurdistan," which was formed in 1943 by a group of independent Kurdish "Marxists." For a time the group cooperated with the *Waḥdat-un-Niḍāl*, faction but eventually–in 1946–many of its members came over to the Iraqi Communist party. The others joined the Kurdistan Democrats.

[71]For the stand of the Jewish Communists, see also p. 501.

[72]"The Report of Comrade Fahd at the 1944 Party Conference" in *Qaḍiy-yatuna-l-Waṭaniyyah* ("Our National Cause") (Al-Qā'idah Press, 1945) and *Al-Qā'idah*, Year 2, No. 3 of March 1944.

[73]The text of Basīm's paper was published in *Al-Qā'idah*, Year 2, No. 6 of April 1944, pp. 1-10.

[74]*Al-Qā'idah*, Year 2, No. 3 of March 1944.

[75]Conversation of writer with Mālik Saif (for Saif see Table 19-3) in November 1957. Although Mālik Saif, who betrayed the party in 1948, is

far from being an impartial witness, his testimony in this particular connection has the ring of authenticity and is strongly supported by likelihood. Yahūda Ṣiddīq (see Table 19-3), who suffered death by hanging, said much the same in a November 1948 testimony to the police about the delegates of the party congress of March 1945. Iraqi Police File No. 3882 and File entitled *Case No. 4/47* refer.

[76]The discrepancy between the analysis which follows and that in W. Z. Laqueur's *Communism and Nationalism in the Middle East* (New York, 1956), pp. 187-188, is due to the fact that Laqueur mistakes the Internal Rules for the National Charter of the party.

[77]The Charter was published in *Al-Qā'idah*, Year 2, No. 3 of March 1944 and, as amended by the First Party Congress in March 1945, in *Qaḍiyyatuna al-Waṭaniyyah* (Baghdād, 1945), pp. 13-16.

[78]Art. 1.

[79]Art. 2. Many of the provisions of the Iraqi Constitution–and, in particular, those relating to freedom of expression, assembly, and so on–were in practice ineffective.

[80]Art. 3.

[81]Art. 4a.

[82]Art. 4b.

[83]Art. 5. *Khāwas* were arbitrary impositions by shaikhs of nomadic tribes.

[84]Art. 6.

[85]Art. 7.

[86]Art. 8.

[87]Art. 9.

[88]Art. 10.

[89]Art. 11.

[90]Art. 12. In many of its passages, the program resembled the charter of the Syrian Communist party adopted on January 1, 1944. There were, however, a number of notable omissions. The Iraqi program did not call for "raising the standing of the intellectuals, scientists, and artists and the protection of professors and teachers" or for "reviving the Arab intellectual heritage" or for "the strengthening of relations . . . with the

Arab countries" (Articles 10, 9, and 4, respectively, of the Syrian charter). However, an amendment to the Iraqi program in the sense of the last article was adopted by the First Party Congress held in March 1945. The Syrian charter was published in a pamphlet entitled *The Resolutions of the National Congress of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon* (Beirut, 1944) (in Arabic), pp. 12-14.

[91]*Al-Qā'idah*, Year 2, No. 2 of March 1944.

[92]For Yahūda Ṣiddīq see Table 19-3.

[93]Conversation with Mālik Saif in November 1957.

[94]*Al-Qā'idah*, Year 3, No. 5 of March 1945.

[95]The text of the Rules were published in a brochure entitled *The Internal Rules of the Communist Party of Iraq* (in Arabic) (Baghdād, 1945).

[96]Art. 1.

[97]The *kasabāḥ* are humble people who have no regular employment and earn their livelihood by doing various odd jobs.

[98]Art. 4.

[99]*ibid*.

[100]Art. 5.

[101]"International fascists . . . imperialists . . . and local reactionaries."

[102]Art. 2.

[103]Art. 3.

[104]*Ibid*.

[105]Art. 9.

[106]Art. 9e.

[107]Art. 13b.

[108]Art. 21.

[109]Art. 5. Incidentally, this paragraph has also found its way into the latest version of the Rules of the Ba'th party.

[110]See p. 505.

[111]The organization of the party is discussed in another chapter.

[112]*Al-Qā'idah*, Year 3, No. 5 of March 1945. The added articles were: *Article 13a*. "We struggle . . . for political cooperation among the Arab peoples and among their democratic parties and associations with a view

to achieving the independence of Palestine and the colonized and ‘protected’ Arab countries and with a view to perfecting the independence of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Egypt.” *Article 13b*. “We struggle for the conclusion of an honest alliance which would facilitate the realization of these aims.” *Articles 14 and 15*, which called for social and economic cooperation among the Arab peoples and countries.

[113]The candidate members of the Central Committee are included in these figures. Consult Table 19-3.

[114]Almost the entire Jewish component of *Waḥdat-un-Niḍāl* rejoined Fahd. A number of its non-Jewish members preferred to cease their activities and later enrolled in the legal left-wing Ash-Sha‘b party.

[115]*Al-Qā‘idah*, it will be remembered, was the main mouthpiece of the Iraqi Communist party.

[116]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 3, No. 6 of April 1945, p. 8.

[117]For Zakī Khairī, see Table 14-2. His principal collaborator was the ‘Ānah-born Moslem Sunnī lawyer Sharīf ash-Shaikh. For the latter, see Table 37-1. Khairī’s committee never counted more than 30 members (Police File No. 414, Mālik Saif’s testimony of 26 December 1948).

20 New Situations, New Approaches

[1]For the Rashīd ‘Ālī movement and the Thirty-Days’ War between Britain and Iraq, see pp. 451 ff.

[2]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 6-7 of May-June 1941, pp. 1-3.

[3]This is a reference to the rise of prices by leaps and bounds and the acute shortage of needed supplies. See Table 17-2.

[4]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 13 of November 1941, p. 4.

[5]*Ibid*., pp. 4-5.

[6]For the internationalist position, see e.g. R. Palme Dutt, “Notes of the Month,” *Labour Monthly* of September 1941.

[7]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 5 of February 1942, pp. 1-2.

[8]It must be remembered that in 1942 a sizable British military organization based in Baṣrah forwarded through Khaniqin and across Iran much-needed supplies to the Russian armies.

[9]“Report of Comrade Fahd at a meeting of the Central Committee held on the 17 May 1942,” *Ash-Sharārah*, No. 10 of May 1942, pp. 2-3.

[10]Martial law was declared on 3 June 1941, that is, after the collapse of the Rashīd ‘ĀIī movement, and was lifted only on 2 March 1946. The martial law was, strictly speaking, less related to world war conditions than to the basic unpopularity of the government.

[11]Al-Midfa‘ī, an ex-Sharīfian officer and *mallāk*, filled the office of prime minister from 2 June 1941 to 7 October 1941.

[12]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 6-7 of May-June 1941, p. 3.

[13]Mas‘ūd was arrested on 29 October 1941.

[14]Nūrī as-Sa‘īd, also an ex-Sharīfian officer, took office on 9 October 1941 and remained as premier till 3 June 1944.

[15]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 13 of November 1941, pp. 4-5.

[16]Resolution of the Central Committee entitled “Our Attitude toward the Present Government” in *Ash-Sharārah*, No. 5 of February 1942, pp. 3-4.

[17]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 8 of April 1942, p. 5.

[18]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 10 of May 1942, p. 1.

[19]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 12 of June 1942, p. 3.

[20]See pp. 478-479.

[21]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 2, No. 1-14 of January 1944, p. 2.

[22]*al-‘Amal*, No. 3 of 1944, p. 14.

[23]*Ash-Sharārah*, No. 10 of May 1942, p. 5, contains the party’s answer to this charge.

[24]For the main provisions and an analysis of the Charter, see pp. 513 ff.

[25]This found expression, of course, in the central watchword of the party: “*A* Free Homeland and a Happy People.” See *Al-Qā‘ idah*, No. 3 of March 1944, p. 1; No. 4 of March 1944, p. 1; No. 7 of May 1944, p. 1; and No. 8 of June 1944, p. 1.

[26]Article 2 of Charter; and *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 3 of March 1944, p. 1; No. 7 of May 1944, p. 1; No. 8 of June 1944, p. 1; No. 9 of August 1944, p. 1; No. 10 of September 1944, p. 1, etc.

[27]Al-Pāchachī remained as premier till 31 January 1946.

[28]*Qaḍiyyatunā al-Waṭaniyyah* (Al-Qā‘idah Press, 1945), pp. 6-7.

[29]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 3, No. 6 of April 1945, p. 1.

[30]Police File No. J 344, entitled “The Railways Workers’ Union.”

[31]E.g., *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 3, No. 13 of July 1945, p. 2; Fahd’s report to the Central Committee at its Plenary Meeting of September 1945; *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 3, No. 17 of September 1945, p. 3; and memorandum of the Iraqi Communist party to head of state dated 21 November 1945.

[32]The Kurdish Republic was proclaimed on 22 January 1946, and the Azerbaijanī autonomy on 12 December 1945.

[33]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 4, No. 5 of 1 February 1946, pp. 1-2.

[34]The reconstruction of events in this and the following paragraphs is based in part on information in the Police Files entitled “The National Democratic Party,” “The Peopled Party,” “The Independence Party,” “The National Union Party,” and “The Party of National Liberation,” and in part on an interview with ex-Premier Tawfīq as-Suwaidī in 1965 and on conversations in 1957 with Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, Muḥammad Ḥadīd, Ḥusain Jamīl of the National Democratic party, Muḥammad Mahdi Kubbah, Ṣiddīq Shanshal, and Fā’iq as-Sāmarrā’ī of the Independence

party, ‘Azīz Sharīf of the People’s party, and Sālim ‘Ubaid an-Nu‘mān of the Party of National Liberation. A detailed National Democratic party statement dated 1 December 1948, which surveyed 1946-1948 events, and which was made available to this writer by ach-Chādirchī, was also consulted, as well as the documentation in Abd-ur-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt-il-Irāqiyyah*, VI, 293-297 and VII, 1-88.

[35]For Al-Pāchachī, see Table 7-4.

[36]See Table 14-2.

[37]The influence on the People’s party came from the Syrian rather than the Iraqi Communist party.

[38]For a more concrete identification of the more important of these parties, see pp. 299 ff., 305 ff., and 586 ff.

[39]Conversation with Sālim ‘Ubaid an-Nu‘mān, secretary of the National Liberation party.

[40]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Nos. 9, 10, 11, and 12 of 1, 8, 22, and 28 April, 1946, respectively; and No. 13 of 15 May 1946.

[41]Conversation of writer with Tawfīq as-Suwaidī in Beirut on March 19, 1965.

[42]Al-‘Umarī took office on June 1, and resigned on November 14, 1946.

[43]Police File No. J 384, entitled “The National Liberation Party”; and *Ash-Sha‘b* of 29 June 1946.

[44]For the *Wathbah*, see Chapter 22.

[45]The word is Kurdish and the gardens were so called because their owners were Christians.

[46]See pp. 622 ff.

[47]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 14 of 20 October 1946.

[48]Text of letters exchanged on 20 November 1946 between Nūrī and Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, leader of the National Democrats in *Internal Bulletin of the National Democratic Party*, No. 8 of 1 February 1947 (in Arabic), pp. 6-8.

[49]Conversation with Sālim ‘Ubaid an-Nu‘mān, secretary of the unlicensed National Liberation party and *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 5, No. 2 of December 1946, pp. 1 and 5-6.

[50]An-Nu‘mān.

[51]The reader should not leap to the *a priori* conclusion that Fahd took for law any advice coming from Damascus. For Fahd’s relations with the Syrian Communist party, see pp. 579 ff.

[52]This could be simply a reference to the Iraqi Communists living in Syria, or a reference to the latter and the Syrian Communist leaders.

[53]I.e., the leaders of the National Democratic party.

[54]I.e., freedom of political action.

[55]The letter was among the papers found on Fahd on 18 January 1947, and is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled “The Papers of the First Central Committee.” This is, of course, a police classification, as Fahd’s committee was not the first Central Committee of the Communist party.

[56]For the Party of National Liberation, see p. 593.

[57]The copy of this letter is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled “The Papers of the First Central Committee.”

[58]Ṣāliḥ Jabr was minister of finance and, as it subsequently came to light, was already earmarked to head the next cabinet.

[59]Al-Baṣṣām was the then minister of education and a collaborator of Jabr.

[60]I am including this passage here in view of its relevance to the comment from Syria that follows.

[61]The handbill was reprinted in *Al-Qā‘idah,* No. 2 of December 1946, pp. 5-6.

[62]This was one of the nicknames attached to Fahd in the correspondence originating from Syria. *Al-Ḥājj* in Islam is, of course, the title of one who has performed the pilgrimage to Mecca.

[63]The reference here is definitely to Ṣālih Jabr and Ṣādiq al-Baṣṣām. Whether by “others” are meant also the Liberals and National Democrats is doubtful, for in another passage–omitted from the text above–Fahd is commended for his attitude toward the two parties.

[64]National or patriotic *(waṭaniyyah), not* nationalist *(qawmiyyah).*

[65]The original of this letter is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled “The Papers of the First Central Committee.”

[66]For Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl, see Table 14-2.

21 The Arrest of Fahd and after

[1]The name of a famous Moslem saint.

[2]Article 7 prohibits torture.

[3]Deposition by Zakī Basīm of 19 May 1947 in Police File entitled *Case No. 4/1947*.

[4]Fahd's deposition of 18 January 1947, *ibid*.

[5]Fahd's statement before Iraq's High Criminal Court in the session of 21 June 1947; *Az-Zamān* and *Ar-Rā'id* of 22 June 1947; conversations of writer with Ibrahīm Najī Shmayyel, the apothecary in whose house Fahd and Basīm were arrested, and with Sālim ʻUbaid an-Nuʻmān, the then secretary of the National Liberation party and a sharer in Fahd's ordeal.

[6]For this point and the text of the letter in question see pp. 576 ff.

[7]For the international ties of the party, see Chapter 24.

[8]For the contents of some of the letters received from abroad and found on Fahd, see pp. 534, 536, and 595.

[9]In fact, the list captured by the government was not that of the members of the Communist party but of the National Liberation party, an auxiliary organization.

[10]Iraqi Police File entitled *Case No. 4/1947;* and Files No. 487, 3347, and 3436; *Az-Zamān* and *Ar-Rā'id* of 22 June 1947; *Al-Bilād* and *Ash-Shaʻb* of 24 June 1947; and *Al-Qāʻidah* No. 4 of July 1947.

[11]Rashād Ḥātim and ʻAbd-ul-Wahhāb ar-Raḥbī.

[12]The government received protests even from Shaikh Asʻad Qaddūrah, the muftī of Ṣafad, and Shaikh Jamāl-ud-Dīn as-Saʻdī, the imām of aj-Jazzār Mosque in Acre.

[13]See, e.g., *Al-Hadaf* (a Beirut newspaper) of 2 July 1947.

[14]Shmayyel's penalty was identically altered.

[15]Police File entitled *Case No. 4/47;* and *Kifāḥ-us Sijjīn ath-Thawrī* of 14 February 1954.

[16]A sort of a prison barrack.

[17]Police Files No. 487, 3347, 3436, and 7680; and *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 16 of 3 March 1954, pp. 9-10 and 16.

[18]For Ṣiddīq, see Table 19-3.

[19]This is clear from a letter written to Ṣiddīq by Fahd on 17 May 1948, calling attention to the latter's decision of a year before. A copy of the letter is in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[20]For Saif see Table 19-3.

[21]The editorial was entitled "The meaning of the reactionary attack against the democratic elements in Iraq," and described the conditions of the captive Communist leaders. *Al-Qā'idah*, No. 3 of June 1947, pp. 1-4.

[22]Conversation, Mālik Saif.

[23]For Ḥaskail Ṣiddīq, see Table 19-3.

[24]I.e., comrade-in-charge.

[25]The Kurdish Democratic party–a continuation, in part, of the Ruzkari Kurd (see Chap. 27, n. 2)–was formed in 1946 by the Kurdish lawyer Ḥamzah 'Abdallah and others, and identified itself with the cause of Mulla Muṣṭafa al-Barzānī. It had its support among urban Kurds and, though influenced by Marxist ideas, stood mainly for the creation of a "Democratic State of Kurdistan" combining the region of Khāniqin and the provinces of Mosul, Arbīl, Kirkūk, and Sulaimāniyyah, and linked "federally" to Iraq, but "free to conclude treaties of friendship or alliance with any of the democratic states."

[26]Letter from al-Ḥājj (Fahd) to the first *mas'ūl* (Mālik Saif) dated 27 November 1947. A copy of the letter is in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

22 *Al-Wathbah*

[1]See Chapter 17.

[2]For the Schalchiyyah workers, see pp. 617 ff.

[3]The 1930 Treaty obliged Iraqis, among other things, 1. to consult closely with Britain in all matters of foreign policy affecting its interests; 2. to extend to Britain in times of war or "a threat of war" all the facilities and assistance that Iraq could give on its territory; 3. to admit the importance of protecting at all times "the essential communications of His British Majesty" through Iraq; and 4. to "permit" Britain to occupy

two air bases—Shu‘ay bah near Baṣrah and Ḥabbāniyyah to the west of the upper Euphrates. The related Financial Agreement required Iraq to turn the Port of Baṣrah and the Iraqi Railways into semiautonomous corporations. The corporations came under the virtual control of British officials. See Iraq, *Treaty of Alliance between Iraq and Great Britain Signed on 30th June, 1930* (Government Press, Baghdād).

[4]For Ṣāliḥ Jabr, consult also Table 7-4.

[5]For the biographical details on Ṣāliḥ Jabr, I am indebted to Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, leader of the National Democratic party, and to Tawfīq as-Suwaidī, one-time prime minister of Iraq.

[6]Iraqi Police Report of 30 December 1947 in File entitled *Case No. 5/48*. The formal preliminary negotiations were conducted in Baghdād by Ṣāliḥ Jabr, but the parties felt that the latter was no more than an instrument by which Nūrī and the regent sought to advance their aims, and that the talks that mattered were effected by Nūrī or the regent.

[7]Report of the Directorate of Investigations dated 7 January 1948 in File entitled “The Independence Party”; and File entitled *Case No. 5/48*. In assessing the content of the report and, in particular, the reference to the use of force, the date of the report must be kept in mind. The reference might have been inserted to excuse the ruthlessness shown by the police on 5 January.

[8]Report dated 5 January 1948 from Ḥusain ‘AIī, dean of the Law School to the minister of defence, entitled “Clash between the Police and the Law. Students in the Morning of Monday, the 5th January.”

[9]Police File entitled *Case No. 5/48;* Salma Yūsuf, editor, *The Immortal Wathbah* (in Arabic) (Baghdād, March 1948), pp. 12-14; and Maḥmūd al-Qādī, *January, the Month of National Struggle* (in Arabic) (Baghdād, March 1948), pp. 23-34.

[10]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 6, No. 1 of November 1947, p. 9.

[11]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 6, No. 2 of December 1947, pp. 1-2.

[12]I.e., comrade-in-charge.

[13]Conversation with this writer in November 1957. Yahūda Ṣiddīq, Saif’s collaborator, testified to the same effect in his statement to the police of October 1948. Iraqi Police File No. 7680 refers.

[14]They were Amīn Zakī, Sa‘īd ad-Dujailī, ‘Awād Mahdī al-‘Azzāwī, and Ibrahīm Ḥamādī ar-Rubai’ī–all law students–and Jāsim Muḥammad Rajab and Tawfīq al-Alūsī, students at the secondary schools of al-‘Aḍhamiyyah and of al-Karkh, respectively.

[15]Conversation, Mālik Saif; Saif’s statement to the police of November 1948; and (Secret) Report from the Director of Investigations to the Minister of Interior dated 7 December 1948 and entitled “The Events of Last January” in Police File entitled *Case No. 5/48*.

[16]Article 1 of Treaty.

[17]Article la of Annex of Treaty.

[18]Article lb of Annex.

[19]Article Id of Annex. Majīd Khaddūrī, the author of *Independent Iraq 1932-1958* (London, 1960), lost sight of this crucial article in affirming unqualifiedly (on p. 267) that the two air bases “were handed back to Iraq.” Khaddūrī also read Article lb of Annex as meaning that Britain’s use of facilities “would be dependent on Iraq’s invitation” (p. 266). The article, however, makes it quite clear that the extension of the “invitation” was mandatory. The “innovation,” as Khaddūrī calls it, was, it is plain, purely terminological.

[20]For a summary of the more essential clauses of the 1930 Treaty, turn to p. 545, n. 3.

[21]Quoted in cable dated 10 October 1947 from Regent ‘Abd-ul-Ilāh to Premier Ṣāliḥ Jabr. Text of cable is in ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt-il-‘Irāqiyyah*, VII, 216-217.

[22](Secret) Report from the Director of Investigations to the Minister of Interior, dated 7 December 1948 in File entitled *Case No. 5/48*.

[23]The *shargāwiyyas* (literally the “Easterners”) are the people of the mud-huts that migrated to Baghdād from the southeast, and particularly from the province of ‘Amārah.

[24]Police File entitled *Case No. 5/48;* Salma Yūsuf, editor, *The Immortal Wathbah* (in Arabic) (Baghdād, 1948), pp. 18-31; Munīr al-Qāḍī, *January, the Month of National Struggle* (in Arabic) (Baghdād, 1948), pp. 90-94; Kāmil Qazanchī (head of the “Cooperation Committee”–see p. 549), *The Glorious Wathbah of the People* (in Arabic)

(Baghdād, 1948), pp. 1-6; al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt-il-Irāqiyyah*, VII, 255-262.

[25]Independence party leaflet of 22 January 1948.

[26]Statement of 22 January by Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, leader of the National Democratic party. *Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār* of 23 January 1948 refers.

[27]Communist party circular of 22 January 1948.

[28]A poet of decidedly Communist sympathies.

[29]The head of the "Cooperation Committee."

[30]The chief of Investigations.

[31]Members of the Istiqlāl or Independence party.

[32]I.e., the statement of 22 January 1948 enjoining calm.

[33]An auxiliary of the Communist party.

[34]Late prime minister of Iraq.

[35]I.e., the Communist prisoners in Kūt.

[36]The dismissal of the Jabr government, the unleashing of democratic freedoms, the abolition of the treaty, and the complete withdrawal of British forces, among other things. See Kāmil Qazanchī, *The Glorious Wathbah of the People* (in Arabic), pp. 5-6.

[37](Secret) "Special Report of the Directorate of Investigations on the Demonstrations of the 23rd January 1948" in Iraqi Police File entitled *Case No. 5/48*.

[38]Communist party circular of 22 January 1948 in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[39]Statement by the Central Committee dated 27 January 1948 and entitled "Declaration of the Communist Party on the New Imperialist Conspiracy."

[40]In its letter No. 1825 of 3 February 1948, the Directorate General of Awqāf (Religious Endowments) protested to the Ministry of Interior against the "violation" by the police of the sanctity of the mosques on 27 January. The text of the letter is in Al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt-il-Irāqiyyah*, VII, 272.

[41]An internal Communist source identified "Party member 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān" as the person who set fire to the car: undated internal party report addressed to the Central Committee and entitled "A

Comprehensive Description of the Heroic Acts of the Demonstrators on the 27th January" in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[42]Internal Communist Party Report to the Central Committee entitled "A Comprehensive Description of the Heroic Acts of the Demonstrators on the 27th January"; Al-Qāḍī, *January, the Month of National Struggle* (in Arabic), pp. 131-133; Yūsuf, *The Immortal Wathbah* (in Arabic), pp. 43-46; Al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, pp. 262-274; and Police File entitled *Case No. 5/58*.

[43]For aṣ-Ṣadr, see also Table 7-4.

[44]For Badrossian, see Table 19-3.

[45]I.e., "comrades-in-charge."

[46]1 dīnār = 1,000 fils = £1.

[47](Secret) letter of 6 December 1948 from the Ministry of Interior to the Directorate General of Police; and letter of 7 December 1948 from the director of investigations to the minister of interior. Both letters are entitled "The Events of Last January," and the one from the Investigations is based on statements made by Mālik Saif, the defecting first *mas'ūl* of the party. File entitled *Case No. 5/48*.

[48]The party's receipts and expenditures increased in subsequent months, however. See Table 28-1.

[49]The summary of accounts is in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[50]Letter which is undated but written in May 1948 by Fahd in Kūt prison to the first *mas'ūl* of the party (Mā1ik Saif), *ibid*.

[51]Undated internal manuscript written in 1950 by Bahā'-ud-Dīn Nūrī, the then party secretary, and entitled "Truths about the Deviations that Occurred in the Party," pp. 3-4.

[52]The Committee first appeared in the Autumn of 1946.

[53]Conversation, Zakī Khairī, leader of the Committee, June 1958; and Police File No. 414 on "Zakī Khairī."

[54]"Kamāl" is Mālik Saif's party name.

[55]Letter from al-Hājj (Fahd) to Comrade Mājid (Yahūda Ṣiddīq) dated 17 May 1948 by the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the

Second Central Committee."

[56]Letter which is undated but written in May 1948 by Fahd to the first *mas'ūl* (Mālik Saif), *ibid*.

[57]Statement of the Communist party entitled "The Essence of Our Movement for Independence" and dated 1 February 1948.

[58]Internal paper of the Central Committee in manuscript form entitled "Strategic Lines" in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[59]The Yugoslav point of view was set forth in an article by E. Kardelj, which exerted an influence also upon the Communist Party of India and was published in Bombay in 1947 in a pamphlet form under the title *Problems of International Development: A Marxist Analysis*. See G. D. Overstreet and M. Windmiller, *Communism in India* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1959), pp. 258-259 and 268-269.

[60]E. Zhukov, "Obostrenie Krizisa Kolonial'noi sistemy" (The Aggravation of the Crisis of the Colonial System), *Bolshevik*, 15 December 1947, pp. 51-64. For a French translation of excerpts from this article, see H. C. d'Encausse and S. Schram, *Le Marxisme et l'Asie 1853-1964* (Paris, 1965), pp. 365-368.

[61]The government of aṣ-Ṣadr held office from 29 January to 16 June 1948.

[62]See pp. 626-627.

[63]Even Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, the leader of the National Democratic party, felt it necessary to speak out against the indiscipline and "conceit" of the students. Ach-Chādirchī, *Fī-t-Tawjīh-il-Waṭanī Ba'd-il-Wathbah* (On National Guidance after the *Wathbah)* (Baghdād, 1948), pp. 32-38.

[64]See pp. 611 ff.

[65]This committee comes into view for the first time in 1948.

[66]For Yūsuf Ismā'īl consult Table 14-2.

[67]"Guardian angel [aṣ-Ṣadr was a man of religion] but a disguised agent of British imperialism." Le Comité des Démocrates Arabes à Paris, *Message de solidarité et salut fraternel au peuple Iraqien à l'occasion du l*[e] *anniversaire du soulevement Al-Wathbah* (January 1949), p. 1.

[68]Letter written to Mālik Saif in early February 1948 but undated, in twenty-volume Police folio entitled “Papers of the Second Central Committee.”

[69]Fahd would again stress this demand in a letter to Saif dated 19 March 1948, *ibid*.

[70]Letter of February 1948.

[71]The leadership of the Liberal party embraced members of well-known bourgeois families and included Kāmil al-Khuḍairī, the president of the Baghdād Chamber of Commerce. However, the heart of the party was the popular ex-provincial governor Sa‘d Ṣāliḥ.

[72]Letter of February 1948.

[73]Letters to Mālik Saif written in late February and on 19 March 1948 in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled “Papers of the Second Central Committee.”

[74]Consult, e.g., *Ṣawt-ul-Ahālī* of 10 and 11 February and 1 and 2 March 1948. See also the joint statement of the Liberals, National Democrats, and the Independence party of 6 March 1948 in al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt-il-Irāqiyyah*, VII, 287.

[75]Letter to Mālik Saif of 19 March 1948.

[76]For the Communists and the Palestine question, turn to Chapter 25.

23 The Disaster; the Death of Fahd on the Gallows; the “Children Communists”

[1]For ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq see Table 19-3.

[2]For Ḥammūdī see Table 22-1.

[3]Sālim ‘Ubaid an-Nu‘mān, leader of the Communist prison organization in 1949: conversation with this writer, February 1964.

[4]For ash-Shabībī see Table 19-1.

[5]Conversation, Mālik Saif, first *mas‘ūl* in 1948, February 1964.

[6]Police Files No. 487, 3347, and 3436; internal report from “Sa‘īd,” the *mas‘ūl* of workers in Baghdād, to the party center dated 16 February 1949 in the seventeen-volume Police folio entitled “Papers of the Third

Central Committee"; *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 16 of 3 March 1954; *Al-Ahālī* of 15 February 1959.

[7]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī of* 3 March 1954.

[8]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* of 20 February 1959.

[9]Internal letter from "Sāṭi'" to the party center dated 17 February 1949 in the seventeen-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Third Central Committee."

[10]Entry dated 12 March 1949 in Police File entitled "Russian Propaganda."

[11]See Table A-23.

[12]See Table A-22.

[13]See Table 23-1.

[14]Instructions from the party center dated 1, 16, and 23 January 1949 in the seventeen-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Third Central Committee"; and undated internal manuscript written in 1950 by Bahā'-ud-Dīn Nūrī , the then party secretary, and entitled "Truths about the Deviations that Occurred in the Party," pp. 7-8.

[15]Letter dated 30 January 1949 from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Iraq to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon in the Police folio entitled "Papers of the Third Central Committee."

[16]The appeal is in the Police folio entitled "Papers of the Third Central Committee."

[17]See p. 543.

24 Fahd, the Communist International, the Soviets, the Syrian Communists, and the People's Party

[1]Letter No. SF 6/2 of 20 April 1949 from P. B. Ray Esq. c/o A.H.Q. Detachment R.A.F. Baghdād, British Forces in Iraq to Bahjat al-Aṭiyyah, director C.I.D. Baghdād.

[2]Fahd was a supporter of the Nationalist party prior to joining the Communist movement.

[3]Police File entitled *Case No. 4/47;* and *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 5, No. 3 of June 1947, p. 2.

[4]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 2, No. 12 of November 1944, p. 6.

[5]Statement of 10 November 1948 to the police by Mālik Saif, who led the party from September 1947 to October 1948. However, Yahūda Ṣiddīq, Saif's predecessor, asserted on the strength of a conversation he had had with Zakī Basīm, Fahd's closest confident, that the paper for *Al-Qā‘idah* was procured secretly from *The Times* press in Baṣrah. Iraqi Police File No. 7680.

[6]Report of the director of criminal investigations to the minister of interior of 12 March 1946 entitled "Survey of the Situation of the Communists in Iraq as of the 1st March 1946," p. 3.

[7]Police File entitled *Case No. 4/1947*; File No. 487; *Al-Bilād* of 24 June 1947, and *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 5, No. 4 of July 1947.

[8]In Arabic *Ḥadrat:* a respectful form of address.

[9]Literally "professor," a form of address to intellectuals.

[10]A member of Dāūd aṣ-Ṣāyegh's factional League of Iraqi Communists.

[11]‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl, an old Iraqi revolutionary and in 1946 a member of the Central Committee of the Syrian Communist party. See Table 14-2.

[12]I.e., League of Iraqi Communists.

[13]I.e., the Iraqi Communist party.

[14]Khālid Bakdāsh, secretary of the Syrian Communist party.

[15]The letter is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the First Central Committee."

[16]For the data on al-Maghribī, Iraqi Police File No. 1831.

[17]Conversation with Wadī‘ Ṭalyah, member of the Central Committee of the party 1940-1942. For Ṭalyah, see Table 16-1.

[18]For Mahdī Hāshim, see Table 14-2.

[19]Mālik Saif, member of Fahd's Central Committee, told the police in November 1948 that he had heard from Yahūda Ṣiddīq, also of the Central Committee, that Fahd obtained the printing press from Tūdeh.

Siddīq, however, denied any knowledge about this matter. Iraqi Police File No. 7680 refers.

[20]Badrossian to the police in November 1948. Iraqi Police File No. 6140 has reference.

[21]For az-Zarqā, see Table 19-3.

[22]For ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl, see Table 14-2.

[23]“Ḥāris” was in all probability Constantine Sam‘ān, a native of Mosul, later a dentist.

[24]From a statement of Mālik Saif (see Table 19-3) given to the police on 17 October 1948; Iraqi Police File No. 7680 refers. This statement was not included in the version of Saif’s testimony published by the government in *Mawsū‘ah Siriyyah Khāṣṣah* (1949).

[25]Iraqi Police File entitled *“The Syrian Communist Party.”*

[26]I am indebted for the information in this passage to Professor Yūsuf Ibish, a member of a prominent Kurdish landowning family of Damascus.

[27]For data on Bakdāsh, Iraqi Police File entitled “The Syrian Communist Party” and the biographical article in the Communist weekly *Al-Akhbār* of 10 June 1962, p. 2.

[28]Khālid Bakdāsh, *Al-Ḥizb-ush-Shuyū‘ī fī-n-Niḍāl Li’ajl-il-Istiqlāl wa-s-Siyādat-il-Waṭaniyyah* (The Communist Party in the struggle for National Independence and Sovereignty) (Beirut, 1944), p. 74. See also articles 2 and 3 of The Internal Rules of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon, adopted on January 1944.
It is true that Lenin was for recruiting workers–and as a rare exception admitting even priests–who believed in God, but only in order to educate them in the spirit of the party’s Communist program. Bakdāsh’s 1944 charter, on the other hand, could not be said to have been Communist in character.

[29]See National Charter of the Syrian Communist party in *Qarārāt ul-Mu’tamar-il-Waṭanī l-il-Ḥizb-ush-Shuyū‘ī fī Sūriyyah wa Lubnān* (The Resolutions of the National Congress of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon) (1944), pp. 12-14.

[30]Bakdāsh viewed the dissolution of the Comintern as facilitating the realization of the desired internal national union, Bakdāsh, *Al-Ḥizb-ush-*

Shuyūʻī fī-n-Niḍāl, p. 7.

[31]Khālid Bakdāsh, *Al-Ḥizb ush-Shuyūʻī fī Sūriyyah wa Lubnān. Siyāsatuhu al-Waṭaniyyah wa Barnāmijuhu al-Waṭanī* (The Communist Party in Syria and Lebanon. Its National Policy and its National Program) (Beirut, 1942), pp. 23-24.

[32]Khālid Bakdāsh, *Baʻḍu Masā'ilina al-Waṭaniyyah* (Some of Our National Questions) (Beirut, 1943), p. 18; see also Bakdāsh, *Al-Ḥizb-ush-Shuyīʻī fī-n-Niḍāl*, p. 74.

[33]*Ibid*., p. 49.

[34]Khālid Bakdāsh, *Niḍāluna-1-Waṭanī wa Akhṭār-ul-Fāshiyyah al-Khārijiyyah wa-d-Dākhiliyyah* (Our National Struggle and the Internal and External Dangers of Fascism), report of Khālid Bakdāsh at the meeting of the Central Committee and of the representatives of the principal organizations of the party held on 23 July 1944 (Beirut, 1944), p. 24.

[35]Bakdāsh, *Baʻḍu Masā'ilina al-Waṭaniyyah*, pp. 17-18. Cf. Bakdache, *La Charte Nationale du Parti Communiste en Syrie et au Liban* (Beirut, 1944), p. 15.

[36]Bakdāsh, *Baʻḍu Masā'ilina al-Waṭaniyyah*, pp. 22-24. It is not without interest from the point of view of the relations between the Soviet Union and its Western allies that Bakdāsh delivered this speech on 6 November 1943.

[37]See, e.g., *Al-Qāʻidah*, No. 11 of November 1943, pp. 4-5; No. 4 of March 1944, pp. 1-2; and No. 1 of 7 November 1945, pp. 3-5.

[38]"Earner": *kāsib* in Arabic: a general term in Iraq referring to all people of humble status who earn their livelihood by labor.

[39]*Al-Qāʻidah*, No. 4 of February 1945, pp. 5-6.

[40]Article 4 of Party Rules adopted in March 1945; and *Al-Qāʻidah*, No. 5 of June 1943, p. 8.

[41]*Al-Qāʻidah*, No. 5 of June 1943, p. 8.

[42]*Ibid*., p. 5.

[43]Article 5 of Party Rules.

[44]See, e.g.. *Ash-Sharārah*, No. 13 of November 1941, p. 2, and No. 5 of February 1942, pp. 9-10; and *Al-Qāʻidah*, No. 6 of July 1943, p. 8, No.

3 of March 1944, p. 2, and No. 13 of November 1944, p. 1.

[45]Statement of Mālik Saif to the police on 17 October 1948; Iraqi Police File No. 7680 refers.

[46]The lawyers Maḥmūd Ṣāliḥ as-Sa‘īd, ‘Abd-ul-Amīr Abū Turāb, Ibrahīm al-Khuḍairī, Ibrahīm ad-Darkazlī, Yūsuf Jawād al-Mi‘mār, Tawfiq Munīr (later of the Peace Partisan Movement), and ‘Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf (a member of the Central Committee of the Communist party in the fifties and early sixties). Source: Iraqi Police File entitled “The People’s Party.”

[47]These publications, which first appeared in 1943, were not in any way connected with the Ba‘th party.

[48]Entry dated 1 July 1944 in Iraqi Police File on “The People’s Party.”

[49]Entry dated 30 August 1944, *ibid*.

[50]Conversation, ‘Azīz Sharīf, Damascus, 14 July 1958. It should be noted, however, that ‘Azīz Sharīf became a member of the Central Committee of the Communist party after the 1958 Revolution.

[51]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 11 of July 1945, p. 5; and internal report of 15 August 1947 delivered by Kāmil ach-Chādirchī at a closed meeting of the Central Committee of the National Democratic party, Chādirchī’s Party Book (which he kindly allowed this writer to peruse), p. 2.

[52]Chādirchī’s Party Book, p. 2.

[53]For al-Khaṭīb, see Table 14-2.

[54]Conversation, ‘Azīz Sharīf; Iraqi Police File entitled “The People’s Party;” and File No. 357, entitled “Azīz Sharīf.”

[55]See *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 14 [should be No. 3] of February 1945, pp. 3-7; No. 5 of April 1945, pp. 1-2; and No. 11 of July 1945, pp. 3-5.

[56]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 17 of September 1945, p. 6.

[57]Conversation on 14 July 1958 in Damascus.

[58]Conversation with this writer in November 1957. Cf. with his statement to the police of 17 October 1948, Iraqi Police File No. 7680.

[59]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 14 [should be No. 3] of February 1945, pp. 3-7.

[60]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 5 of April 1945, p. 1; Longrigg in *Iraq 1900 to 1950*, p. 316 gives the rough figure of 60,000 as the total number of laborers employed by the British army in wartime. According to the

official *Report on the Industrial Census of Iraq, 1954*, pp. 6-7, 90,291 workers were engaged in the industrial establishments of the country in that year. This figure does not include the workers in the oil field, but embraces workers in small family workshops.

[61]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 5 of April 1945, p. 2.

[62]The letter here reproduced was published by Fahd in *Al-Qā‘idah* No. 17 of September 1945, p. 6, and is obviously a decoded version of the original, which has not survived.

[63]Clearly, ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl. For the latter, see Table 14-2.

[64]Member of the Central Committee of the Syrian Communist party.

[65]However, a decade later–in April 1965–the Egyptian Communist party would dissolve itself and be commended for its application of Marxism “in a creative way.”

[66]The main objectives (national independence and democratic freedoms) and membership requirements of the two parties were identical. See Article 2 of the Program of the People’s Party and Article 6 of its Internal Rules in pamphlet entitled *Minhāj Ḥizb ash-Sha‘b* (Baghdād, 1946).

[67]“Secret” Report by Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, leader of the National Democratic party, delivered at a closed meeting of the Central Committee of this party on 15 August 1947, p. 3 of Chādirchī’s Party Book.

[68]The first Central Committee of the party, which was elected on 26 April 1946, consisted, apart from ‘Azīz Sharīf, of Khalīl Mahdī and ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb al-Māshṭah–both petty traders; Ḥamīd Hindī and Wadī‘ Ṭalyah–both mechanics; and of ‘Abd-ul-Amīr Abu Turāb, a lawyer. The last three persons were ex-members of the Iraqi Communist party. Ṭalyah served on Fahd’s Central Committee in 1940-1942. The Second Central Committee of the People’s party, elected on 6 January 1947, included ‘Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf and Tawfīq Munīr, brother and cousin of Azīz Sharīf, respectively, and both lawyers and with prominent roles in the Iraqi Communist movement in the late fifties. Source: Iraqi Police File on “People’s Party.”

[69]“Secret” report of ach-Chādirchī, pp. 2-3 and 33; and *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, Year 1, No. 15 of 20 February 1954, p. 12, and Year 2, No. 8 of 27 August 1954, p. 8.

[70]Entry by technical adviser dated 6 January 1947 in Iraqi Police File entitled “People’s Party.”

[71]Report dated 15 February 1947 from assistant director of police, Baghdād Province to minister of interior in Iraqi Police File entitled “The People’s Party.”

[72]Report dated 5 April 1947 from assistant director of police Baghdād Province to minister of interior in Iraqi Police File entitled “The National Democratic Party,” I.

[73]See Tables A-4 to A-7.

[74]The only exception was made in favor of Na‘īm Dankūr, a Jewish publicist.

[75]Wadī‘ Ṭalyah to this writer in February 1964.

[76]Fahd designated Ḥusain Muḥammad ash-Shabībī to head this party. Most of its work was, however, carried under the direct supervision of its secretary, Sālim ‘Ubaid an-Nu‘mān, a Sunnī lawyer born of a petty trader in ‘Ānah in 1921, and a Communist since 1942. Source: Iraqi Police File entitled “The Party of National Liberation.”

[77]From the List of Members of the party in Iraqi Police File entitled “The People’s Party.” The League Against Zionism was a front organization of the Iraqi Communist party.

[78]From an internal report sent to Fahd by a member of the Port Workers’ Union’s Administrative Bureau entitled “Wrecking Activities of the Members of the People’s Party in the Port Workers’ Union.” The report is undated, but from internal evidence appears to have been written in or around June 1946, and is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled “The Papers of the First Central Committee.”

[79]For ‘Abd-ul-Qādir lsmā‘īl see Table 14-2.

[80]From a letter by “Ḥāris” to Fahd written in November 1946 which is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled “Papers of the First Central Committee.”

[81]Letter from ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl to Fahd dated 17 December 1946 refers, *ibid*.

[82]I.e., ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl.

[83]I.e., Muḥammad ‘Alī az-Zarqā. For az-Zarqā see Table 19-3.

[84]It is part of Communist practice that Communists residing in a foreign country, even if temporarily, are considered members of the Communist party of the country of residence and not of the Communist party of the country of origin.

[85]The letter is in the Police folio entitled “Papers of the First Central Committee.”

[86]Letter to Fahd from “Ḥāris,” Damascus, dated 16 December 1946, *ibid*.

[87]Letter from ‘Abd-ul-Qādir, *ibid*.

[88]The reference is to Fahd’s statement of 26 November 1946, in which he defined his attitude to the government of the day. See p. 535.

[89]For the *Wathbah* see Chapter 22.

[90]Fahd took particular exception to an article written by Bakdāsh entitled “The Miracle of Iraq” and published in the People’s party’s organ *Al-Waṭan* in Nos. 396 and 397 of 24 and 25 March 1948. The article depreciated *by implication* the part played by the Iraqi Communist party in the *Wathbah*. But what displeased Fahd even more was that the article should have been published in *Al-Waṭan* and not in his own *At-Taḥarrūr*.

[91]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī* (The Struggle of the Revolutionary Prisoner), No. 16 of 3 March 1954, p. 7.

[92]*Intifādat-ush-Sha‘b-il-‘Irāqī wa Atharuha fī Tatawwor-il-Qaḍiyyah al-‘Arabiyyah* (The Uprising of the Iraqi People and its Effect on the Development of the Arab Question), a study authorized and approved by the leadership of the Communist parties of Syria and Lebanon and Assigned for discussion in all committees and circles of the two parties (1948), p. 20.

[93]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 16 of 3 March 1954, p. 7.

25 The Communists and the Question of Palestine

[1]United Nations, *Official Records of the First Special Session of the General Assembly*, 1947, I, 134.

[2]United Nations, *Official Records of the Second Session of the General Assembly*, 1947, Ad Hoc Committee Palestinian Question, pp. 69-70.

[3]In 1918 the Jewish inhabitants of Palestine, many of whom were migrants from Eastern Europe, numbered about 56,000, or 8% of the whole population. Their proportion rose to 11.1% in 1922, and to 16.8% in 1931. In 1946 they counted about 608,000, or 31.4%, and the Arabs 1,293,000, or 66.8%. Out of the total land area of 6,580,755 acres, the Jews owned 162,500 acres in 1918, or 2%, and 372,925 acres in 1945, or 5.7%; and individual Arabs 3,143,693 acres, or 47.8% in 1945. Almost all of the remaining area was *mīrī*, or state property.

There were no significant changes in ownership between 1945 and 1948. See Palestine Government, *A Survey of Palestine 1945-1946*, I, 141, and *Village Statistics 1945*, p. 3; and Sami Hadawi, *Palestine: Loss of a Heritage* (San Antonio, Texas, 1963), pp. 13-14, 18, 130, 131, and 133.

[4]See, e.g., *Al-Qā'idah*, No. 9 of October 1943, and No. 18 of October 1945; and Article 13a of the 1944 National Charter of the Communist Party of Iraq.

[5]Communist pamphlet entitled "Program and Internal Rules of the League for the Combating of Zionism" (in Arabic), p. 3.

[6]The League for the Combating of Zionism, *Al-'Uṣbah fī Kifāḥihah Ḍudd-iṣ-Ṣahyūniyyah* ("The League in its Struggle against Zionism") (Baghdād, 1946), pp. 51-52. The appeal was signed by Yūsuf Hārūn Zilkha, chairman of the League.

[7]The text of this internal directive is in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[8]See, e.g., *Al-Asās*, No. 42 of 22 May 1948.

[9]See *Al-Asās*, No. 43 of 24 May 1948.

[10]Statement of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party of 6 July 1948 in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[11]Report No. 100 of 4 November 1947 from Fāris al-Khūrī, New York, to the Syrian Foreign Ministry, unpublished papers of Jamīl Mardam Bey, former Syrian premier, which became accessible to this writer through the courtesy of Professor Walīd al-Khālidī.

[12]Letter No. 10/B of 22 October 1947 from the Syrian charge d'affaires, Moscow, to the Foreign Ministry, Damascus; unpublished

papers of Jamīl Mardam Bey.

[13]"Arab Democratic Committee in Paris," *Ḍau' 'ala-1-Qaḍiyyah al-Filisṭiniyyah* ("Light on the Palestine Question") 11 June 1948 (Baghdād, August 1948), pp. 1-12, twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[14]For Yūsuf Ismā'īl, see Table 14-2.

[15]Internal party letter dated 9 February 1949 and entitled *Mulāḥaḍhāt 'an Siyāsat-il-Ḥizb* ("Observations on the Policy of the Party"), p. 14.

[16]A mass prison barrack.

[17]Conversation, Sālim 'Ubaid an-Nu'mān, a comrade of Fahd.

[18]Azīz Sharīf, *As-Siyāsat-uṣ-Ṣaḥīḥah Liḥal-il-Qaḍiyyat-il-Filisṭiniyyah* ("The Correct Policy for the Solution of the Palestine Question") (Baghdād, 1948), pp. 13-15 and 33.

[19]The Iraqi Communist Party, *Our Political Plan for Patriotic and National Liberation in the Light of the Circumstances Revealed by the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (in Arabic). Report of the Central Committee as approved by the Second Party Conference, September 1956, p. 32.

[20]In Iraq, for example, the great mass upheaval of 1948, the *Wathbah*, which pointed to serious structural trouble in the society, occurred months before the outbreak of the Palestine war and the defeat of the Arab armies.

26 The Character, Scope, and Forms of Party Activity

[1]See Chapter 20.

[2]See pp. 611 ff.

[3]See pp. 626-627.

[4]See Chapter 22.

[5]The real leaders never took part in the demonstration but were present in a place nearby, and communicated their orders to subordinates on the spot by means of special messengers.

[6]See pp. 569 ff.

[7]Undated memorandum entitled “Methods of Combatting Communism” (in Arabic) prepared in early 1949 by Bahjat ‘Aṭiyyah, director, Criminal Investigations Department, p. 2.

[8]Letter No. SF 6/2 of 20 April 1949 from P. B. Ray Esq. c/o A.H.Q. Detachment, R.A.F. Baghdād, British Forces in Iraq to Bahjat al-‘Aṭiyyah, director, C.I.D., Baghdād, p. 2.

[9]Prior to June 1947, the party was in a state of temporary disarray; in October 1948, its first *mas‘ūl* (comrade-in-charge) was arrested, which led before long to the break-up of many of its organizations. *Al-Qā‘idah*, it should be mentioned, did not appear for a number of months after the *Wathbah* of January 1948, when the party confined its publishing effort to the issuing of *Al-‘Uṣbah*, an open paper.

[10]The figures in the table provide to a certain extent a check on or a corrective to the figures in Tables A-4 and A-26.

[11]A substantial number of Christians lived in Mosul, but the urban population of the province was predominantly Sunnī Arab, and its rural population predominantly Sunnī Kurdish. *Al-Qā‘idah* was, as a rule, distributed in the urban districts.

[12]See p. 140.

[13]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Nos. 4-5 of March 1944, p. 12.

[14]The *sirkāl* is the man directly in charge of cultivation in a shaikhly estate.

[15]Conversation with Mālik Saif (for Saif, see Table 19-3).

[16]For Fi‘l Damad see also Table A-2.

[17]*Salaf:* collection of rural dwellings.

[18]*Mas‘ūl:* comrade-in-charge.

[19]I.e., the members, supporters, friends, and allies of the party.

[20]Fahd’s report to the First Party Congress entitled “Strengthen the Reorganization of Your Party. Strengthen the Reorganization of the National Movement.” (Baghdād, 1945), pp. 14-15; and Articles 2-6 of the basic program of the Friends of the Peasants’ Societies, which is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled “Papers of the First Central Committee.”

[21]Article 5 of the charter. *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 3 of March 1944.

[22]*Sayyid*: person claiming descent from the Prophet Muḥammad.

[23]The Qadīrī brotherhood takes its name from its founder, Shaikh ‘Abd-ul-Qādir al-Gailānī (1077-1166).

[24]The officer administering the province.

[25]The preceding account is based on an internal party report in manuscript form entitled “The Movement of the Peasants of ‘Arbat” prepared in 1948 in Sulaimāniyyah for the information of the Central Committee of the Communist party.

[26]Report of “Comrade Ḥāzim” (Zakī Basīm, a member of the Politbureau) at the First Party Conference, *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 6-19 of April 1944, p. 8.

[27]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 13 of 15 May 1946, p. 1.

[28]The text of the committees’ program is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled “Papers of the First Central Committee.”

[29]Party memorandum dated 21 November 1945 in same folio refers.

[30]For a nationalist view of the congress, see *Al-Yaqḍhah* of 3 May 1948.

[31]*Al-Asās* (a legal paper loyal to the party) of 15 April 1948.

[32]The names of the members of the GUIS Executive Committee and Secretariat were cited in *Al-Asās* of 17 and 19 April 1948. Data of a biographical nature or as to party affiliation were obtained from police files.

[33]The figures, which were supplied by a party organizer in the Directorate of Railways, are cited in a 1946 party memorandum which is in the Police folio entiṭled “Papers of the Third Central Committee.”

[34]Article on the activities of the party among the railway workers written by a superior party organizer for the benefit of the party cadre in the prison of Kūt, and published in the internal prison journal, *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 7 of 23 December 1953, pp. 1-5.

[35]The workers of Schalchiyyah numbered 1,265 in May 1945, i.e., about 12 percent of all railway workers. Iraqi Police File No. J 344 entitled “Railway Workers’ Union” refers.

[36]*Ad-Daftar al-‘Ummālī* (The Workers’ Book)–an internal handwritten party record containing notes on party activity among the workers–pp. 3-

4; *The First Congress of the Railway Workers' Union* (in Arabic) (Baghdad, 1945), pp. 6-7; and Iraqi Police File No. J 344.

[37]1 dīnār = £1.

[38]*Constitution of the Iraqi Railway Workers' Union* (in Arabic) (Baghdad, 1944), Articles 2-7.

[39]*Ad-Daftar al-'Ummālī*, p. 3.

[40]1,000 fils = 1 dīnār = £1.

[41]The text of the petition containing the demand is in Iraqi Police File No. J 344.

[42]Petition of April 17 by the president of the union to the prime minister in same file has reference.

[43]The texts of the warning and the appeal are in Iraqi Police File No. J 344.

[44]Entry dated 24 April 1945, *ibid*.

[45]*Ad-Daftar al-'Ummālī*, pp. 6-8.

[46]E.g., *Al-Qā'idah*, No. 9 of May 1945, pp. 5-6 and No. 18 of October 1945, p. 11.

[47]In his letter (No. CME/E11/4980) of 17 July 1945, the chief of the mechanical engineers reported that his workers refused to be represented by the Labor Committees. The committees were also overwhelmingly rejected by the Schalchiyyah workers in a referendum conducted by the Administration on 27 September 1945.

[48]Undated internal report in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[49]Ma'qil is the site of the main wharves.

[50]Iraqi Police File No. J 367 entitled "The Baṣrah Port Workers' Union"; unsigned and undated internal party document prepared in Baṣrah and entitled "Report to the Central Committee on the Port Workers' Union" in the seven-volume Police folio entitled "Papers of the First Central Committee"; *Al-Waṭan*, No. 15 of 26 October 1945, p. 20; *Al-Qā'idah*, No. 11 of 22 April 1946, p. 10; *Constitution of the Port Workers' Union* (in Arabic) (Baghdād, 1945) and *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 6 of 16 December 1953, pp. 12-14, No. 7 of 23 December 1953, pp. 7-8, and No. 8 of 2 January 1954, pp. 10-13.

[51]Iraq, Ministry of Economics, *Statistical Abstracts 1947 and 1949*, pp. 115 and 159, respectively.

[52]Iraqi Police File No. J 344.

[53]Undated internal party report, manuscript, “The Struggle of the Oil Workers at Kirkūk,” pp. 9-10.

[54]*Ibid*., pp. 5-6. The other four were Fāḍil Jawād (Communist) and Ḥājjī Ibrahīm Yāsīn (traveling companion), representing the Engineering and Transport workers, and Rasūl ‘Abd-ul-Karīm (Communist) and Muḥammad Rashīd (pro-Communist), representing the city line workers.

[55]1,000 fils = 1 dīnār = £1.

[56]The minimum allowance was 120 fils.

[57]Ḥanna Ilyās, Ḥikmāt Fāris ar-Rubai‘ī, Fāḍil Jawād, and Rasūl ‘Abd-ul-Karīm.

[58]Undated internal party report, manuscript, “The Struggle of the Oil Workers at Kirkūk,” p. 9.

[59]Report No. 5336 of 7 July 1946 from acting *Mutaṣarrif* of Kirkūk to the minister of interior.

[60]Testimony of the worker Muḥammad ‘Alī Khaḍr before the Kirkūk Penal Court at its sitting of 11 May 1947.

[61]Testimony of police agent Ni‘mat Salmān at the same sitting.

[62]In a statement made public by the director general of propaganda on 13 July 1946, the figures of five dead and fourteen wounded were given, but in an internal report to the Central Committee, the party *mas‘ūl* at Kirkūk cited the names of ten of the dead and twenty-seven of the wounded, and mentioned that there were others whose bodies had been carried away and whose names were not known. Report entitled “The Struggle of the Oil Workers at Kirkūk,” pp. 19-20.

[63]Decision of the Kirkūk Penal Court of 1 June 1947.

[64]Undated internal party document, manuscript, “Report on the Strike of the Oil Workers at K3,” pp. 2-6.

[65]Undated internal party document, manuscript, “Report on the Strike of the Oil Workers at K3,” pp. 7-15; consult also *Ṣawt-ul-Ahālī*, No. 1504 of 7 May 1948; *Liwā’-ul-Istiqlāl*, No. 367 of 7 May 1948.

[66]Undated internal party document, “The Strike of the Oil Workers at K3,” pp. 17-29.

27 The Organization, Membership, and Social Structure of the Party (1941-1949

[1]Iraqi Police File No. 6140, Mālik Saif’s statement of November 1948.

[2]Formed in 1945, the Ruzkari Kurd party or Party of Kurdish Liberation was originally an auxiliary organization of the Kurdish Communist *Shursh* group. However, in 1946, after the adherence to the Iraqi Communists of a part of its membership, the Ruzkari Kurd, linking hands with a number of Kurdish nationalists, renamed itself the Kurdish Democratic party.

[3]November 1948 statement of Yahūda Ṣiddīq Iraqi Police File No. 7680 refers.

[4]Fahd told the police on 25 January 1947 that the party had no organizations in Dulaim and Mosul; Iraqi Police File No. 487 refers.

[5]Also known as *munaḍhḍhim*: organizer.

[6]Sometimes there was no over-all *mas’ul* of students, and responsibility was divided between a *mas‘ūl* of colleges and a *mas‘ūl* of secondary schools, both being raised to membership in the Baghdād Local Committee. Occasionally the *mas‘ūl* of a particular college, e.g., the School of Law, was given that status, and thus reported directly to the center.

[7]The local committees of ‘Amārah, Ḥillah, Diyālah, as-Sulaimāniyyah, and Arbīl had *mas‘ūls* of peasants. The villages which possessed a *mas‘ūl* were: Buhruz and Zuhairat in Diyālah, Jatinḥākah and ‘Ainkāwah in Arbīl, Barzinja in Sulaimāniyyah, and Ḥuwaijah in Kirkūk. In ‘Amārah, Communist activity was conducted among peasants of the Azairij and Albū Muḥammad tribes.

[8]Table A-4 appears to substantiate this point.

[9]Town in the province of Diyālah.

[10]The letter, bearing the date of December 1946, is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled “Papers of the First Central Committee.”

[11]This is a reference to the *mas'ūl* of the Kirkūk Local Committee, who was at that time (January 1947) a person from Shaqlāwa, Arbīl.

[12]A worker.

[13]Letter to Fahd from members of the Kirkūk organization dated 7 January 1947. The letter is in the Police folio entitled "Papers of the First Central Committee."

[14]Fahd's statement to the police dated 25 January 1947 in Iraqi Police File No. 487; and File entitled *Case No. 4/1947*.

[15]Saif to this writer in November 1957.

[16]Fahd's statement to the police of 25 January 1947 in Iraqi Police File No. 487; and File entitled *Case No. 4/1947*.

[17]See Chapter 17.

[18]I.e., in the days prior to January 1947.

[19]The *Wathbah* (see pp. 545 ff.) occurred in January 1948.

[20]In May 1948.

[21]The letter is in the Police folio entitled "The Papers of the Second Central Committee."

[22]For an estimate of the total number of party members in 1948 see Table 27-6.

[23]As is evident from the tables found at various points in this treatise, the writer has not relied entirely on police records but has carried painstaking investigations of his own to determine the members of the Central Committees.

[24]Prior to 1943 there was no stable and formalized structure of echelons.

[25]The changes occurred for the most part between January 1947 and June 1949.

[26]See above, pp. 640 ff.

[27]See Chapter 17.

[28]1 dīnār = £1. Their scale of pay at the beginning of the forties was 8 to 18 dīnārs (Cadre Law No. 30 of [l5 April] 1940: *al-Waqāi' al-Irāqiyyah*, No. 1793 of 29 April 1940) but was altered on 29 March 1942 to 6 to 21 dīnārs (Law No. 14 of 1942 amending Cadre Law No. 30 of 1940: *al-Waqāi' al-Irāqiyyah*, No. 2013 of 9 April 1942) and was only

raised to 8 to 40 dīnārs in April 1951 (Educational Service Law No. 21 of 1951: *al-Waqāi‘ al-lrāqiyyah*, No. 2958 of 11 April 1951).

[29]This scale applied to graduates of the Higher Teachers’ Training College, was fixed by Cadre Law No. 30 of 1940, and remained in effect until changed to 18 to 60 dīnārs by Educational Service Law No. 21 of 1951. The pay of graduates of junior colleges ranged in the forties from 12 to 25 dīnārs, while holders of a bachelor’s degree from outside Iraq could earn as high as 40 dīnārs, and those with a degree of specialization beyond the bachelor’s degree, 50 dīnārs. Law No. 14 of (29 March) 1942 amending Cadre Law No. 30 of 1940 refers.

[30]The total number of government officials was 17,145 and that of teachers 6,522.

[31]Article 19a of Civil Service Law No. 64 of 1939.

[32]See pp. 470 ff.

[33]See pp. 475-476.

[34]Even seven years after the Communist assumption of power in Russia, i.e., in 1924, women totaled only 8.2 percent of all the members of the Bolshevik party.

[35]See notes of Table A-26. Bear in mind, however, the data on peasants in Table A-4.

[36]The percentages are based on data in Tables 15-1, 19-1, and 19-3.

[37]See pp. 542-543 and 570-571.

[38]See p. 543.

[39]The handbill was drafted by Maurice Ṣabbāgh, a Jewish Communist, and is in the seven-volume Police folio entitled “Papers of the First Central Committee.”

[40]The Iraqi army counted between 40,000 and 50,000 men in 1947. Source: “Report of Captains Muḥammad Ṣafa and ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān Mardam Bey [of the Syrian army] on their Observations during Their Stay with the Units of the Iraqi Army in the Period 13 July-7 September 1947.” The report, dated 13 September 1947, is among the unpublished papers of Jamīl Mardam Bey, once prime minister of Syria, and was shown to this writer by Professor Walīd al-Khālidī.

[41]Jalawlā’ is in Diyālah province to the northeast of Baghdād.

28 The Finances of the Party

[1]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 15 of March 1945.

[2]1 dīnār = £1.

[3]Shurjah is one of the main markets of Baghdād. (Secret) letter dated 7 December 1948 from the Directorate of Investigations to the Ministry of Interior in Iraqi Police File entitled *Case No. 5/48*.

[4]Undated internal party paper in the twenty-volume Police folio entitled “Papers of the Second Central Committee.”

[5]The party included in its leading ranks Muḥammad Ḥadīd, manager and part owner of a thriving industrial enterprise; ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Mirjān, a landowner of great affluence; and ‘Abd-ul-Karīm al-Uzrī, a well-to-do rentier.

[6]Report dated 5 April 1947 from assistant commissioner of police, Baghdād Province, to the minister of interior, in Police File entitled “The National Democratic Party,” I.

[7]The People’s party numbered in 1947 about 2,171 members, see p. 592.

29 Bahī‘-ud-Dīn Nūrī Rebuilds the Party

[1]See Chapter 17.

[2]Deposition of September 1949 by Hadī Sa‘īd, member of the Central Committee.

[3]Chart of the party center entitled “Two Basic Stages in the History of our Party” in nine-volume Police folio containing the papers of Bahā’u-d-Dīn Nūrī ; and *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 8, No. 1 of 8 February 1950.

[4]Internal Communist party circular dated 12 May 1950.

[5]Entry dated 10 August 1950 in Iraqi Police File entitled “Mahdī Hāshim.” For the latter see Table 14-2.

[6]Letter dated 14 August 1954 in Iraqi Police File No. 8025 entitled “Bahā’u-d-Dīn Nūrī .”

[7]Conversation of writer with Bahā’u-d-Dīn Nūrī in the prison of Ba‘qūbah, June 1958; Iraqi Police File No. 8025, and especially June

1953 report of Staff Major Ṣāleḥ Mahdī as-Sāmarrā'ī, *ibid*.

[8]Iraqi Police File No. J/556; al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, VIII, 276; memorandum dated 23 December 1952 from the Iraqi Union of Democratic Youth to the Committee on Human Rights; and *Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, No. 8 of 27 August 1954.

[9]Supplement to *Al-Qā'idah*, No. 7 of late January 1955, entitled "Tactical Observations with a View to Guiding the Revolutionary Tide," p. 5.

[10]See pp. 610-611.

[11]The shaikh's men-at-arms.

[12]Internal communication from 'Amārah to the party center dated 18 August 1952, and entitled "Report on Āl-Azairij" in nine-volume Police folio containing the papers of Bahā'u-d-Dīn Nūrī ; party proclamation of 9 October 1952, entitled "Long Live the Peasants' Struggle for the Land"; *Al-Qā'idah*, Year 10, No. 24 of mid-October 1952, p. 6; and *Niḍāl-ul-Fallāḥ* (The Struggle of the Peasant), No. 1 of December 1952, pp. 1-2.

30 The *Intilāiḍah* of November

[1]Resolution of the Central Committee of the National Democratic party dated 26 October 1950. Kāmil ach-Chādirchī's Party Book, p. 159.

[2]The United Popular Front had originally embraced members of the National Democratic party, but had to exclude them from its ranks to obtain a license from the government. Iraqi Police Files, entitled "The United Popular Front" and "The National Democratic Party," I.

[3]Letter from ach-Chādirchī, Baghdād, to Muḥammad Ḥadīd, London, dated 14 November 1952. Ḥadīd, a member of the Central Committee of the National Democratic party, was then on a visit to London. Source: ach-Chādirchī's Party Book.

[4]Letter from ach-CHādirchī to Ḥadīd dated 20 November 1952.

[5]For the texts of the petitions, see al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, VIII, 286-295.

[6]For the text of the regent's reply see *ibid*., pp. 299-300.

[7](Secret) Report from as-Sarai precinct to the Special Branch Officer dated 23 November 1952 and entitled “Daily Report for the 22nd November”; *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 26 of late November 1952, p. 5; *Al-Ahālī* of 23 November 1952; and al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, VIII, 310-316.

[8]Special Branch Office report dated 26 November 1952 and entitled “The Names of the Wounded in the Demonstrations.”

[9]Report from aṣ-Ṣabbākhānah precinct to the Special Branch officer dated 25 November 1952 and entitled “The Demonstration of the 23rd November”; report from the Second aṣ-Ṣabbākhānah precinct dated 26 November 1952 and entitled “Daily Report for the 23rd November”; unplaced report to the Special Branch officer dated 23 November 1952, bearing the title “Report on the Demonstrations”; statement to the police dated 20 July 1957 by Bāqir Ja‘far Muḥammad, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist party (see Table 29-1) in Iraqi Police File No. 12690; *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 26 of late November 1952, pp. 5-6; and *Al-Injāz*, No. 13 of February 1953, p. 12.

[10]Report from the Second aṣ-Ṣabbākhānah precinct to the Special Branch officer dated 26 November 1952; and al-Ḥasanī, *Tārīkh-ul-Wizārāt*, VIII, 317-323.

[11]Comrade Bāsim [Bahā’u-d-Dīn Nūrī’s party name], *Concerning the Amendment of the Party’s Charter* (in Arabic) (early April 1953), pp. 19-20.

[12]Report from the Najaf Local Committee to the Party Center dated 16 February 1953 and entitled “Our Organization in the Last Uprising” in the nine-volume Police folio containing the papers of Bahā’u-d-Dīn Nūrī .

31 More and More Extremism, Less and Less Sense

[1]*The National Charter of the Iraqi Communist Party* (in Arabic) (approved by the Central Committee of the party in early March 1953), Article 2. The charter was published in *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 11, No. 2(30) of middle March 1953. It should be noted that the slogan of “a People’s Democratic Government” had been raised earlier on four occasions (see

p. 562 and *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 7, No. 1 of 7 February 1949; Year 8, No. 3 of April 1950; and Year 8, No. 11 of mid-January 1951) but had been lost sight of. During the November 1952 demonstrations, for example, the party shouts were for “a democratic government under Kāmil ach-Chādirchī.”

[2]The Syrian Communist party had adhered to the slogan of “a People’s Democratic Régime” since January 1951, if not earlier. See Khālid Bakdāsh, *To Struggle with Success in the Interest of Peace, National Independence, and Democracy, It Is Necessary to Turn Determinedly toward the Workers and Peasants* (in Arabic) (Damascus-Beirut, 1951), p. 7.

[3]Article 2.

[4]I.e., state lands.

[5]Article 9(a).

[6]Article 1.

[7]Supplement to *Al-Injāz*, No. 13 of middle February 1953, entitled “A Party Decision on the Expulsion of Right Deviationists,” pp. 1-2; *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 1 of late February 1953, p. 2; and Iraqi Police File No. 3506, entitled “Jamāl Ḥaidar ‘Āṣim al-Ḥaidarī,” entries dated 7, 9, and 30 March 1953.

[8]*Let Us Work to Save Comrade Fahd’s Party from the Grip of the Alien Injāzists* (in Arabic) (ash-Shaghghīlah Press, March 1953), pp. 1-10; and *Rāyat-ush-Shaghghīlah*, No. 1 of April 1953.

[9]I.e., of religious endowments.

[10]Iraqi Police File No. 3506; and *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 1 of late February 1953.

[11]Internal letters from party organizer No. 999 to the party center dated 2 and 11 June 1949; *An-Niḍāl*, No. 1 of July 1949; *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 11 of mid-January 1951 and No. 14 of early May 1951; Iraqi Police File No. 357 entitled “ ‘Azīz Sharīf,” entry dated 12 November 1952; Police File No. 2610 entitled “ ‘Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf”; Police File entitled “The People’s Party”; and *An-Niḍāl*, Nos. 1 and 2 of 5 January and 13 February 1953.

[12]Ṣādiq Ja‘far al-Falāḥī and Bā” qir Ja‘far Muḥammad, both members of the Central Committee, were arrested with Nūrī, and on July 19 all

three were sentenced by a military tribunal to hard labor for life. Iraqi Police File No. 8025 entitled “Bahā’u-d-Dīh Nūrī” refers.

[13]For example, in June 1953 he postulated “the seizure of power by the proletariat” as “the immediate task of the workers, peasants, and toiling masses *(sic)” (Al-Injāz*, No. 16 of June 1953, p. 7). Earlier, in May, he had described “the capture of power. . . in conjunction with all the patriotic and anti-imperialist forces” as “the basic task of our party.” *(Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 4 of mid-May 1953, p. 6).

[14]See Table 31-1.

[15]Statement of Communist leader Bāqir Ja‘far Muḥammad dated 20 July 1957 in Iraqi Police File No. 12690.

[16]See, for example, *Al-Injāz*, No. 16 of June 1953, pp. 7 and 10.

[17]Iraqi Police File No. 4424 entitled “Ḥamīd ‘Uthmān.”

[18]In Iran, for example, the Tudeh party shifted in September 1953 from a “mistaken” attitude of hostility to Muḥammad Muṣaddiq, the ex-premier, to one of full support for him. *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 9 of late October 1953 refers. For their part, the Syrian Communists, under Khālid Bakdāsh, had been, since 1951 if not earlier, wedded to the extrem formula of a “People’s Democratic Regime”—a regime which, on their characterization, was to be a mere stepping stone to socialism. (See Bakdāsh, *To Struggle with Success in the Interest of Peace, National Independence, and Democracy, It Is Necessary to Turn Determinedly toward the Workers and Peasants*[in Arabic], p. 7.) However, in the autumn of 1953, the Syrian Communists retreated, it would appear, from this position. An implication to this effect is contained in a statement by Bakdāsh in *For a Lasting Peace, For a People’s Democracy* of 20 November 1953. By February 1954, at the latest, Bakdāsh was calling for “a national democratic government” that would “unleash democratic freedoms” and “realize national ends” (see aṣ- *Ṣarkhah* of 14 February and Bakdāsh, *The Struggle for a United Front and for a National Democratic Government in Syria* (in Arabic) (Damascus-Beirut: Bureau of Popular Publications, 1954), pp. 15-19).

[19]For ar-Raḍī, see Table 31-1 and Chapter 37.

[20]Internal circular entitled “Instructions to all Party Organizations and Fractions” dated 2 September 1953, p. 4.

[21]See Table 23-1.

[22]Iraqi Police File No. 4424 entitled "Ḥamīd 'Uthmān" and File No. 3401 entitled "Ḥusain ar-Raḍī."

[23]Iraqi Police File No. 4424.

[24]*Al-Qā'idah,* No. 12 of mid-September 1954, p. 1.

[25]Supplement to *Al-Qā'idah*, No. 7 of late January 1955, entitled "Tactical Observations with a View to Guiding the Revolutionary Tide," pp. 3-5.

[26]*Ibid*., pp. 2 and 9; and article entitled "The Countryside Is in Need of Organization in the Light of the Teachings of Mao Tse-tung on the Peasants' Movement," in *Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb* ("The Party Combatant"), Year 1, No. 2 of late December 1954, pp. 11-13. In connection with the raising of the watchword of "armed struggle" by 'Uthmān, it is not without interest that, in a speech made in Peking in November 1949, Liu Shao-Ch'i referred to "armed struggle" as "Mao Tse-tung's way" and as "the principal form of struggle for national liberation in many colonies and semicolonies"; and that a Chinese Communist tract published in December 1950 and reprinted in January 1952 ascribed to this formula universal validity. It is also noteworthy that in November 1951, E. M. Zhukov, corresponding member of the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, pointed to the "danger" of "considering the Chinese revolution as a sort of stereotype for the revolutions of popular democracy in other countries of Asia." See H. C. d'Encausse and S. Schram, *Le Marxisme et l'Asie 1853-1964* (Paris, 1965), pp. 382, 386, and 387 ff.

[27]Iraqi Police File No. 4424; and Report by Police Agent, nicknamed "the Kurd," dated May 1956 in File No. 357.

32 A Defeat for the Party, or the Birth of the Baghdād Pact

[1]Decree No. 17 of 22 August 1954 and explanatory statement by minister of interior of 1 September 1954 in *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah* (Iraqi Official Gazette) No. 3455 of 14 September 1954. Incidentally, in November Nūrī would close his legation in Moscow for "reasons of

economy” and in January 1955 would break all official relations with the Soviet Union.

[2]Of 22 August, 22 September, 10 October, and 12 October 1954, respectively.

[3]Waldemar J. Gallman, *Iraq under General Nūrī* (Baltimore, 1964), p. 37.

[4]See Table 17-2.

[5]See Table 6-14.

[6]See pp. 475-476.

[7]*Rāyat-ush-Shaghghīlah*, No. 23 of April 1955, p. 4.

[8]*Ṣada al-Ahālī* of 17 December 1950.

[9]*Ṣada al-Ahālī* of 11 January 1951.

[10]*Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 13 of early April 1951, p. 2.

[11]*Al-Injāz*, No. 11 of October 1952, pp. 23-26.

[12]*Al-Injāz*, No. 11 of October 1952, pp. 23-26, and No. 10 of October 1952, pp. 3-9.

[13]See p. 667.

[14]Al-Qā‘idah No. 26 of late November 1952, pp. 3-5.

[15]Internal report to the Communist party center written in January 1953 and entitled “Text of a Conversation between J [a representative of the Communist party] and K [Kāmil ach-Chādirchī]” in nine-volume Police folio containing the papers of Bahā’u-d-Dīh Nūrī .

[16]*Al-Injāz*, No. 13 of February 1953.

[17]*Al-Injāz*, No. 16 of June 1953, p. 7.

[18]*Al-Injāz*, No. 13 of February 1953, p. 21.

[19]*Pravda* of 15 October 1952, p. 1.

[20]See articles by E. Zhukov, the prominent Soviet expert on Asia, in *Bolshevik* of 15 December 1947, pp. 51-64; and in *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, No. 9 of September 1949, pp. 54-61; and by G. Akopyan, another Soviet specialist, in *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, No. 1 of January 1953, pp. 58-75. Of course, in referring to the “bourgeoisie,” Stalin had really the “big bourgeoisie” in mind. The distinction was explicit in Zhukov, who ranked the “petty bourgeoisie” and “a part of the middle bourgeoisie” with the anti-imperialist forces. Akopyan also distinguished between “the

revolutionary petty bourgeoisie" and "the conciliatory big bourgeoisie," but laid stress on the necessity, in any assessment of the role of the various classes, for each Communist party to proceed, as Lenin had advised, from its distinctive national situation, and to turn to account the slightest possibility of securing mass allies even though they be vacillating, unstable, and unreliable.

[21]Thus in his 1949 article, referred to in the preceding footnote, Zhukov wrote: "The national-reformists of colonial and semi-colonial countries affirm-falsely—their desire to 'keep aloof' from the struggle between the two camps . . . but, in fact, joining hands with the reactionary bourgeoisie, they calumniate the USSR and actively aid the imperialists" (p. 58).

[22]I.e., the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of Syria and Lebanon.

[23]The *Uprising of the Iraqi People and Its Effect on the Development of the Arab Question* (in Arabic) (1948), pp. 23-24.

[24]Khālid Bakdāsh, *To Struggle with Success in the Interest of Peace, National Independence, and Democracy, It Is Necessary to Turn Determinedly toward the Workers and Peasants* (in Arabic) (Damascus-Beirut, 1951), pp. 14-15.

[25]See, e.g., *The Uprising of the Iraqi People*, p. 22.

[26]See Bakdāsh, *To Struggle with Success*, p. 8.

[27]*Ibid*., pp. 11-12.

[28]*For a Lasting Peace, for a People's Democracy* of 20 November 1953.

[29]Statement by Bakdāsh in *Aṣ-Ṣarkhah* of 14 February 1954. See also Bakdāsh, *The Struggle for the National Front and for a National Democratic Government in Syria* (in Arabic), pp. 15-16.

[30]Statement by Bakdāsh entitled "The Parliamentary Elections in Syria and the Attitude of the Communist Party" in *Aṣ-Ṣarkhah* of 23 May 1954.

[31]*Aṣ-Ṣarkhah* of 1 August 1954.

[32]See pp. 676-677.

[33]Internal party circular entitled “Party Directives to All Organizations and Fractions” (Baghdād, early April 1954), pp. 6, 13, and 15.

[34]Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist party entitled “The Attitude of Our Communist Party toward the Political Situation and the Question of Elections” (Baghdād, early May 1954), pp. 15-16.

[35]The charter as published in the press—see, e.g., *Ṣawt-ul-Ahālī* of 13 May 1954—bore the signatures of the leaders of the National Democrats and of the Independence party and of the “representatives of the workers; the peasants; the youth; the students; the lawyers; and the physicians.”

[36]*Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb* (“The Party Combatant”), Year 1, No. 2 of late December 1954, pp. 7-8.

[37]Gallman, *Iraq under General Nūrī*, p. 6.

[38]*Ṣawt-ul-Ahālī* of 11 June 1954.

[39]Gallman, *Iraq under General Nūrī*, p. 4.

[40]*Ibid*., p. 101.

[41]See p. 677.

[42]Iraqi Police File No. 4424 entitled “Ḥamīd ‘Uthmān.”

[43]Gallman, *Iraq under General Nūrī*, p. 93.

[44]Statement of the Central Committee of the Communist party dated 15 January 1955, in *Al-Qā‘idah*, No. 17 of mid-January 1955.

[45]See p. 677

33 A Bit of Forgotten History, or the Tragic Occurrences at the Baghdād and Kūt Prisons

[1]Report No. 2779 of 18 June 1953 from the chief of police of Baghdād Province to the *mutaṣarrif* of Baghdād Province, in Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/34.

[2]Report of the chief of police of Kūt Province dated 6 September 1953 in Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/34; and internal Communist report in manuscript form entitled “The Dreadful Incidents at the Kūt Prison,” p. 38.

[3]*As-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī (“The* Revolutionary Prisoner”) No. 1 of 9 May 1953.

[4]Many of these men were subsequently transferred to the prison of Ba‘qūbah, which in September 1954 held 210 Communists. Letter No. S/556 of 30 September 1954 from the *mutaṣarrif* of Diyālah Province to the minister of interior in Iraqi Police File No. 414 has reference.

[5]Letter dated 11 February 1952 from the superintendent of Kūt Prison to the Directorate General of Prisons in Iraqi Police File No. 414.

[6]Iraqi Police Files No. 3506 and 414.

[7]Conversation, 6 June 1958.

[8]Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/34 and especially Report No. 2779 of 18 June 1953 from the chief of police of Baghdād Province to the *mutaṣarrif* of Baghdād Province; conversation, ‘Abd-uj-Jabbār Ayyūb, superintendent of Baghdād Central Jail; note of protest from the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist party to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights dated 27 June 1953; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, No. 122 of 20 June 1960: account by *A* zīz ash-Shaikh, member of the Central Committee of the party in 1960 and a prisoner at the Baghdād citadel in June of 1953.

[9]Report dated 15 August 1953 from the superintendent of the Kūt Prison to the Directorate General of Prisons; and report dated 6 September 1953 from the chief of police of Kūt Province in Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/34; internal Communist report in manuscript form prepared in 1953 by members of the Kūt Prison party organization and entitled “The Dreadful Incidents at the Kūt Prison.”

[10]Memorandum from the Independence party to the prime minister dated 12 September 1953. The National Democratic party had expressed suspicion of the existence of such a plan back in June. See *Muzakkirāt al-Ḥizb al-Waṭanī ad-Dimoqrātī* (“Memoranda of the National Democratic Party”) (party publications for 1953), p. 29.

34 A Debate on Religion

[1]Letter No. SF6/2 of 20 April 1949 from P. B. Ray c/o A.H.Q. Detachment, R.A.F., Baghdād, British Forces in Iraq, to Bahjat al-‘Aṭiyyah, director, C.I.D., Baghdād.

[2]*Muḥāwarat-ul-lmām-il Muṣlih Kāshif-il-Ghaṭā’ ash-Shaikh Muḥammad al-Ḥusain ma‘ as-Safīrain al-Barīṭānī wa-l-Amīrīkī (“The* Conversation of the Reformist Imam Kāshif-il-Ghaṭā’ ash-Shaikh Muḥammad al-Ḥusain with the British and American Ambassadors”) (Najaf, 1954), pp. 4-5.

[3]*Ibid*., pp. 15-16.

[4]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, Year 1, No. 13 of 2 February 1954, p. 8.

[5]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī*, Year 2, No. 3 of 30 May 1954, pp. 5-7.

[6]These exclamation marks were added by the editors of the prison paper.

[7]This is a reference to Nūrī as-Sa‘īd’s Constitutional Union party.

[8]For Ṣāliḥ Jabr, an ex-prime minister, see Table 7-4.

[9]Men of religion.

[10]*Kifāḥ-us-Sijjīm ath-Thawrī*, Year 2, No. 3 of 30 May 1954, p. 6.

[11]Lenin, *Marx, Engels, Marxism* (Moscow, 1951), pp. 274, 277, 279-280; and Lenin, *Collected Works*, XV (Moscow, 1963), 403, 405, and 407-408.

35 The Composition of the Party (1949-1955

[1]The percentages are based on data in Tables 29-1 and 31-1.

[2]I.e., coffee-servants, porters, janitors, and other menial workers.

[3]1 dīnār = £1 = $2.80.

36 The Communist Helm Changes Hands, the Communist Ranks Close

[1]See pp. 677-678 and 688-689.

[2]For Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī, see Table 31-1 and Chapter 37.

[3]See p. 677.

[4]*Decisions of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party adopted at the Plenary Session of July 1955 and Relating to the Individualistic Leadership in the Party and the Responsibility of Comrade Ṣ* [Ḥamīd ‘Uthmān] (in Arabic), pp. 13-14.

[5]*Ibid*., and Iraqi Police File No. 4424 entitled “Ḥamīd ‘Uthmān,” entries dated 1 and 5 November 1955, and 6 April 1956.

[6]*Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb*, Year 2, No. 3 of early April 1956, p. 8.

[7]Iraqi Police File No. 4424, entry dated 1 April 1958.

[8]For Hāshim, see Table 14-2.

[9]For ach-Chalabī, see Table 31-1.

[10]Report from “The Kurd” dated 16 May 1956 in Iraqi Police File No. 357.

[11]July 1955 resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist party in *Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb*, Year 2, No. 1 of late August 1955, pp. 1-2.

[12]*Rāyat-ush-Shaghghīlah*, No. 28 of October 1955 and No. 32 of end of February 1956; *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 13, No. 11 of December 1955 and Year 14, No. 6 of mid-June 1956; *Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb*, Year 2, No. 4 of end of June 1956; and Iraqi Police File No. 3506, entitled “Jamāl Ḥaidarī ‘Āṣim al-Ḥaidarī,” entries dated 20 January and 17 June 1956.

37 The New Strong Men of the Communist Party: Ḥusain Aḥmad ar-Raḍī, ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah, and Jamāl al-Ḥaidarī

[1]Also known as ar-Raḍawī.

[2]According to Nājī Yūsuf, ar-Raḍī’s father-in-law, there have been intermarriages with Persians in ar-Raḍī’s family which is, however, definitely Arab: conversation with this writer.

[3]For an explanation of this phenomenon, see p. 1000.

[4]The *muftīs* are authoritative expounders of Islamic law.

[5]Ḥanafīs and Shāfi’īs are followers of different schools of Islamic law.

[6]I.e., chief *muftī*.

[7]Iraqi Police Files No. 3401 entitled "Ḥusain Aḥmad as-Sayyid ʻAIī ar-Raḍī"; No. 6244 entitled "Thamīnah Nājī Yūsuf at-Ṭūlāqānī"; No. 3386 entitled " ʻĀmer ʻAbdallah ʻUmar al-ʻĀmīrī"; and No. 3506 entitled "Jamāl Ḥaidar ʻĀṣim al-Ḥaidarī"; Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities. Baghdād and Kāḍhimain*, p. 26; *Al-Akhbār*, No. 451 of 24 March 1963, p. 2; and conversations with natives of Najaf and ʻĀnah, who prefer to remain nameless.

[8]According to his family and to *Pravda* of 12 March 1963, but in 1922 according to Iraqi Police File No. 3401.

[9]Iraqi Police File No. 3401; statement to the police dated 28 January 1958 by Farḥān Ṭuʻmah, member of the Central Committee, in File No. 5062; conversation of writer with Nājī Yūsuf, father-in-law of Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, February 1964; and *Al-Akhbār* of 24 March 1963.

[10]Conversation, February 1962.

[11]Conversation, February 1962.

[12]Entry dated 13 January 1958 in Iraqi Police File No. 3401.

[13]Conversation, February 1964.

[14]See p. 986.

[15]Conversation in February 1964 with Sharīf ash-Shaikh, formally a member of the Central Committee from 1957 to 1963, when he defected.

[16]For this point, see pp. 995 and 998.

[17]ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʻīl in a statement made on the radio and television on 10 March 1963: Iraq News Agency, Supplement to Bulletin 63, 10 March 1963.

[18]Conversation, Sharīf ash-Shaikh, February 1964.

[19]Conversation, February 1962.

[20]ʻAbd-ul-Qādir Ismāʻīl, 10 March 1963.

[21]For ʻĀmer's marriage, see *Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb* of 27 April 1959.

[22]Iraqi Police Files No. 3386, 3401, 5062, 2610, and 479; and conversations with Hānī al-Fkaikī and Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Raḍī, members of the Baʻth Party Command, 6 September 1964. The latter had charge of the investigation of the Communists in the period February-November 1963.

[23]Entry dated November 1957 in Iraqi Police File No. 3506.

[24]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 11, No. 2 of middle March 1953; and “Comrade Bāsim,” *Ḥowla Ta‘dīl Mīthāq-il-Ḥizb* (“Concerning the Modification of the Party’s Pact”), early April 1953, p. 5.

[25]Supplement to *Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 2, No. 9 of late September 1955, p. 1.

38 The Ba‘th of the Fifties: Its Origins, Creed, Organization, and Membership

[1]The following account of the origins of the Syrian Ba‘th is based, unless otherwise indicated, upon conversations with Zakī al-Arsūzī, 17 July 1958; Michel ‘Aflaq, 9 July and 13 July 1958; Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn al-Bīṭār, 13 July 1958 and 7 December 1970; Akram al-Ḥūrānī, 18 July 1958 and 28 February 1970; and other Ba‘thists in various years who do not wish to be named. It is also based on a precis of the history of the party given in an internal Ba‘thī circular I found in the library of Iraq’s Internal Security, and which is entitled *Al-Ba‘th al-Arabī min Khilāl Nidālihī* (“The Arab Ba‘th through Its Struggle”) (1949); as well as on Samī aj-Jundī (an old Ba‘thist), *Al-Ba‘ th* (Beirut, 1969); and a mimeographed internal publication entitled *Taqrīr‘ An Azamat Ḥizbina* (“A Report on the Crisis of Our Party”) put out in 1960 by the “Revolutionary National Command,” a dissident group which in the early sixties opposed ‘Aflaq’s classical Ba‘th, and which was led by ‘Abdallah ar-Rimāwī of Jordan and Fū’ād ar-Rikābī of Iraq, both members of the first Pan-Arab Command of the Ba‘th.

[2]Conversation with Zakī al-Arsūzī, 17 July 1958.

[3]Samī aj-Jundī, *Al-Ba‘th*, pp. 22 and 26.

[4]‘The Revolutionary National Command,” *Taqrīr ‘An Azamat Ḥizbina*, p. 18.

[5]Conversation, 13 July 1958.

[6]Bureau of the Arab Ba‘th, *Al-Qāwmiyyah al-‘Arabiyyah wa Mawqifuha min-ash-Shuyū‘iyyah* (“Arab Nationalism and Its Attitude toward Communism”) (Damascus, June 1944), pp. 3-4.

[7]Bureau of the Arab Ba‘th, *Al-Qāwmiyyah al-‘Arabiyyah wa Mawqifuha min-ash-Shuyū’iyyah* (“Arab Nationalism and Its Attitude toward Communism”) (Damascus, June 1944), p. 3; and conversation, Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn al-Bīṭār, 13 July 1958.

[8]Bureau of the Arab Ba‘th, *Al-Qāwmiyyah*, pp. 7-8.

[9]*Ibid*., pp. 8-9.

[10]Conversation, 13 July 1958.

[11]Conversation, ‘Aflaq.

[12]‘Aflaq in a speech at the first congress of the Ba‘th party, *Al-Ba‘th* (Damascus), 5 April 1947.

[13]Madḥat al-Bīṭār is not a kinsman of Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn al-Bīṭār.

[14]Conversation, ‘Aflaq, 13 July 1958.

[15]*Al-Ba‘th*, 10 and 15 April 1947.

[16]The text of the letter was reprinted in *Al-Akhbār* (Beirut), 17 February 1963. I have it on the most unimpeachable authority that the text is authentic.

[17]Conversation with a Ba‘thī who wishes to remain nameless.

[18]See Jacques Weulersse, *Le Pays des Alaouites* (Tours, 1940), I, 363.

[19]Conversation on 16 July 1958 with Sharīf ar-Rās, one of the Ḥamā leaders of Ḥūrānī’s Arab Socialist party.

[20]Conversations with Akram al-Ḥūrānī, 18 July 1958 and 28 February 1970; Sharīf ar-Rās of Ḥamā, 16 July 1958; and Ṣalāḥ-ud-Dīn al-Bīṭār, 13 July 1958.

[21]Conversation, ‘Aflaq, 13 July 1958.

[22]See pp. 823-824.

[23]The earliest collection of his speeches, remarks, and essays appeared in 1953 in 68 pages, the second in 1959 in 252 pages, and the third in 1963 in 348 pages. The first bore the title *Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th al-‘Arabī* (“For the Cause of the Arab Ba‘th”), the others *Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th* (“For the Cause of the Ba‘th”). Unless otherwise indicated, the references below are to the 1959 edition.

[24]Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th*, p. 147.

[25]*Ibid*., p. 188.

[26]The Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party, *Ad-Dustūr* (“The Constitution”), First Principle.

[27]*Ibid*.

[28]The Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party, *Sharḥ-ud-Dustūr* (“The Explanation of the Constitution”) (undated), pp. 7-9.

[29]*Ibid*., p. 18.

[30]Michel ‘Aflaq, *Fikratunā* (“Our Idea”), essay entitled “Our Idea Is Living and Absolute” (1948), p. 20.

[31]‘Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th*, pp. 31-32.

[32]*Sharḥ-ud-Dustūr*, pp. 17-18 and *Ad-Dustūr*, Third Principle.

[33]‘Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th*, pp. 79, 149, 109, 79, 76.

[34]*Ibid*., p. 109.

[35]*Sharḥ-ud-Dustūr*, pp. 17-18.

[36]See, e.g., *Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th*, pp. 76-82, 109-110, and 149-150.

[37]*Ibid*., pp. 47, 43-44, 79, 81.

[38]“(With the rise of Islam) . . . values were no longer derived from the group nor were they imposed by the individual, but issued from a source above the individual and the group alike.” *Ibid*., p. 79.

[39]*Ibid*., pp. 45-49, 26-27.

[40]‘Aflaq, *Fikratunā*, pp. 18-19.

[41]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th*, pp. 28, 29, 31.

[42]Aflaq, *Fikratunā*, pp. 27-28.

[43]*Ad-Dustūr*, Third Principle.

[44]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th*, p. 29.

[45]*Ad-Dustūr*, Article 5.

[46]*Ibid*., Article 14.

[47]*Sharḥ-ud-Dustūr*, pp. 43-44.

[48]In the Tripartite Union Talks held in Carīo in 1963, one of the Ba‘thī participants remarked: “When revolutionary movements find themselves in power, they discover that many of their antecedent ideas need to be reconsidered. While still in the stage of popular struggle, they call for democracy so that they could carry on their activity under the best possible conditions, but when in the government they find that this

bourgeois democracy is a great danger to the revolution." *Al-Ahrām, Transcript of the Union Talks* (in Arabic) (Cairo, 1963), p. 159.

[49]'Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, pp. 125, 81, 82.

[50]*Ibid*., p. 82.

[51]'Aflaq, *Fikratunā*, pp. 28-29.

[52]'Aflaq, *Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, p. 154.

[53]See pp. 740-741.

[54]See p. 731 and *Ad-Dustūr*, Article 4.

[55]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, p. 86.

[56]See p. 1021.

[57]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, pp. 86, 89.

[58]*Ibid*., p. 77.

[59]*Ibid*., pp. 107, 90.

[60]The inherent contrariety of 'Aflaq's position cannot be laid to the time factor, for the concept of class struggle and the notion that Ba'thī socialism is repugnant to internal division occur in one and the same essay.

[61]Marx and Engels, *Selected Works* (Moscow, 1951), I, 45.

[62]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, p. 96.

[63]*Sharḥ-ud-Dustūr*, p. 15.

[64]*Ad-Dustūr*, Articles 28, 27.

[65]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, p. 87.

[66]*Ad-Dustūr*, Article 4.

[67]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, pp. 126 ff.

[68]In the sixties, however, 'Aflaq would use this term frequently.

[69]*Fī Sabī1 al-Ba'th*, pp. 101, 103, 145, 92.

[70]*Ibid*., pp. Ill, 151; and *Ad-Dustūr*, Article 6.

[71]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, pp. 146, 147, 102.

[72]See p. 737.

[73]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba'th*, pp. 40-41, 29, 103.

[74]*Ibid*., pp. 116, 125, 64.

[75]*Ibid*., pp. 155-157.

[76]*Ibid*., p. 92.

[77]*Ibid*., pp. 18, 119, 120, 116, 33.

[78]*Ibid*., p. 238.

[79]The Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party, *Bimātha Tattisimu Ḥarakatunā* (“What Characterizes Our Movement”), p. 14.

[80]*Fī Sabīl al-Ba‘th*, p. 133.

[81]The Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party, Iraqi Region, *A Talk Given by Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq during the Visit of Some Lebanese Ba‘thists to the Headquarters of the Party in Damascus on 10 April 1955 as Recorded by One of the Comrades* (in Arabic), p. 1.

[82]The following account of the beginning of the Iraqi Ba‘th rests on conversations in Cairo and Beirut with Fū’ād ar-Rikābī, secretary of the first Iraqi Ba‘th Command, 31 January 1962; Sa‘dūn Ḥammādī, member of the first Iraqi Ba‘th Command, 27 December 1962; and Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān, member of the second Iraqi Ba‘th Command, February 1963; as well as on: Internal (Syrian) Ba‘thī Circular No. 1 of 16 February 1949; Report of 11 April 1952 to the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist party from “ ‘Āmer,” a Communist who had been a Ba‘thī from 9 December 1949 to the summer of 1951; report of 28 May 1952 by Baṣrah’s director of police to the director general of police, Baghdād; and undated memorandum by Baghdād’s director of security written in June 1955. Iraqi police dossier on the Ba‘th party refers.

[83]Paragraphs 13, 22, 26, and 46 of the Internal Rules (of 1947).

[84]Paragraphs 14, 23, 26, 27, 28, 31, and 42 of the Internal Rules.

[85]Paragraphs 6, 8, and 29 of the Internal Rules.

[86]He appointed, among others, the leaders of the “branches” and the heads and members of the various bureaus.

[87]Paragraphs 7, 48, 54, 70, and 71 of the Internal Rules (of 1947).

[88]Articles 13 and 14 of the Internal Rules of 1954.

[89]See the Introduction and Articles 13 and 14 of the Internal Rules.

[90]Article 8 of the rules.

[91]See p. 1010.

[92]Articles 18 and 19 of the rules.

[93]Article 14 of the rules.

[94]The first national command consisted of the first seven persons listed in Table A-50.

[95]The weakening of the Shī‘i representation was due to the change in the sectarian composition of the Iraqi Ba‘th leadership after 1963, see pp. 1078-1080.

39 The Arabization of the Communist Party’s View and the Risings at Najaf and Hayy in 1956

[1]*Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb*, Year 2, No. 1 of August 1955, p. 7.

[2]*Al-Ahrām* (Cairo), 25 December 1958.

[3]Bakdāsh referred to “the bloody massacre and acts of terrorism to which a group of patriots [read Moslem Brothers] and democrats [read Communists] were exposed.” *Supplement to Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 2, No. 9 of late September 1955, p. 8.

[4]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 13, No. 10 of 15 November 1955; and *Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb*, Year 2, No. 2 of end of December 1955.

[5]The Iraqi Communist Party, *Our Political Plan for Patriotic and National Liberation in the Light of the Circumstances Revealed by the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (in Arabic). Report of the Central Committee as approved by the Second Party Conference, September 1956, pp. 2 and 27-29; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, Year 14, No. 9 of mid-October 156, p. 8.

[6]Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon on the Question of Arab Unity, *An-Nūr* (Damascus), No. 1375 of 17 May 1956, p. 4.

[7]The Iraqi Communist Party, *Our Political Plan for Patriotic and National Liberation*, pp. 16-17.

[8]For details of these intrigues, refer to Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria* (London, 1965), pp. 263-282.

[9]A joint “Field Command” embracing representatives of the Communists, the Ba‘th, the National Democrats, and the Independents had been created on 29 October 1956, but could not accomplish anything due to the speedy arrest of its members.

[10]For an explanation of this phenomenon, turn to p. 1000.

[11]Letter dated 13 January 1957 from the director of criminal investigations to the *mutaṣarrif* of Karbalā’ in Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/22. This writer, who visited Najaf in 1958 prior to the Revolution, could sense the affection in which Dr. aj-Jawād was held by many Najafis.

[12]For the historical role of these *sayyids* and of the Zuqurt see Great Britain, (confidential) *Personalities. Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kāḍhimain),* p. 68; and “Annual Administration Report, Shāmiyyah Division, from 1st January to 31st December 1918” in *Reports of Administration for 1918. . .* I, 65 and 108 (entry entitled *as-Sayyid Mahdī as-Sayyid Salmān).*

[13]Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/22, letter of 13 January 1957.

[14]Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/22, entry dated 24 November 1956; and report of Police Officer ‘Abdallah Muṣṭafa dated 13 December 1956.

[15]Letter dated 13 January 1957 from the director of criminal investigations to the *mutaṣarrif* of Karbalā’ in Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/22.

[16]Report of police officer ‘Abdallah Muṣṭafa dated 13 December 1956, and entitled “The Incidents at Najaf” in Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/22.

[17]Report of police officer ‘Abdallah Muṣṭafa dated 13 December 1956, and entitled “The Incidents at Najaf” in Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/22.

[18]I.e., an opinion consonant with the Islamic religious law.

[19]Entry dated 8 December 1956 in Iraqi Police File No. 5/3/22.

[20]Letter from the chief of police, Baghdād, to the *mutaṣarrif* of Baghdād Province dated 9 September 1956 in Iraqi Police File entitled “Communist Activities in Kūt Province.”

[21]The Iraqi Communist Party, *The Uprising of 1956 and Our Tasks in the Present Circumstances* (in Arabic) (Baghdād, March 1957), a report written on the basis of discussions held by the Central Committee in February 1957, p. 65.

[22]Statement of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist party dated 11 December 1956 and entitled “On the Results of the Aggression against Egypt and the Effects on the Political Situation in Iraq.” See also

The Uprising of 1956 and Our Tasks in the Present Circumstances, pp. 54 and 60-62.

[23]Great Britain, *Administrative Report on the Muntafiq Division for 1921*, p. 8.

[24]*Ibid*., p. 42.

[25]A dūnum equals 2,500 square meters. The figure was obtained from the Ministry of Agrarian Reform in February 1964.

[26]Conversation, March 1958.

[27]Letters from the chief of police of Kūt Province to the director general of police, Baghdād, dated 5, 18, and 21 December 1956; telegram from police officer of Ḥayy dated 17 December 1956; entries dated 6 and 17 December 1956 and 10 January 1957 in Iraqi Police File entitled "Communist Activities in Kūt Province"; and statement of the Iraqi Communist party dated 21 December 1956 entitled "Rise in Support of the Brave Masses of Ḥayy in Their Armed Uprising. "

[28]*Ittiḥād-us-Sha'b*, Year 15, No. 1 of mid-February 1957.

40 The Formation of the Supreme National Committee, February 1957

[1]In the same elections, two members of the Central Committee of the Jordanian Communist party won seats in Parliament: Dr. Ya'qūb Zayādīn, a Christian physician from Jerusalem, and Fā'iq Warrād, a Moslem schoolteacher from Ramallah. 'Abd-ul-Qādir as-Ṣāliḥ, a traveling companion and the Jordanian minister of agriculture in 1956, was also returned. *Aj-Jumhūriyyah* (Cairo), 23 October 1956.

[2]For 'Azīz ash-Shaikh, see Table 37-1.

[3]1963 Statement of 'Azīz ash-Shaikh to Ba'thī investigators; Iraqi Police File No. QS/26 refers.

[4]Chādirchī was kind enough to provide this writer with a photostatic copy of the handwritten notes.

[5]*Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb*, Year 2, No. 1 of late August 1955, p. 4.

[6]See pp. 749-750.

[7]*Al-Qā‘idah*, Year 13, No. 10 of 15 November 1955.

[8]Report of the Fourth Regional Conference of the Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party in Iraq, dated mid-November 1957 and entitled “The Front of National Union”; Iraqi Police File entitled “The National Democratic Party,” II; Police File entitled “The Ba‘th Party”; Iraqi Police File No. QS/26; and ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh, “The Front of the National Union before the Revolution,” *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, Year 2, No. 143 of 17 July 1960, p. 8.

[9]The Iraqi Communist Party, *Our Political Plan for Patriotic and National Liberation in the Light of the Circumstances Revealed by the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (in Arabic), report of the Central Committee as approved by the Second Party Conference, September 1956, pp. 20-21 and 26.

[10]*Ibid*., p. 18; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, Year 14, No. 9 of mid-October 1956, p. 8.

[11]The Kurdish organization was not represented in the “field command” partly on account of reservations from the side of the Independents and the Ba‘th. Moreover, the Communists and the United Kurdish Democrats were not on the best of terms by virtue of the circulation of a slogan calling for the dissolution of the branch of the Communist party in Kurdistan.

[12]Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, the leader of this party, was at the time in the Baghdād prison.

[13]1963 Statements of ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh and Kamā”l ‘Umar Nadhmī in Iraqi Police Files No. QS/26 and QS/119, respectively; entries dated 4 January, 3, 14, and 24 April, and 14 July 1957 in files entitled “The Ba‘th Party” and “The National Democratic Party,” II; *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, Year 15, No. 2 of mid-April 1957, p. 1; Year 15, No. 3 of early June 1957, p. 1; and Year 2, No. 143 of 17 July 1960, pp. 8 and 14; and conversations with Kāmil ach-Chādirchī, Muḥammad Ḥadīd, and Fū’ād ar-Rikābī. For the relations between the Supreme National Committee and the Free Officers Movement, see also pp. 794-795 and 803.

41 The Free Officers, the Communists, and the July 1958 Revolution

[1]Iraqi Police File entitled “The Ba‘th Party.”

[2]See pp. 998 and 1088-1089.

[3]See pp. 30-31.

[4]The preceding paragraphs draw basically upon conversations in 1962, 1967, and 1970 with Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, secretary of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers; Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, the first chairman of the committee; General ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, a member of the committee and ex-president of Iraq; Colonel Shakīb al-Faḍlī; Staff Brigadier ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Farḥān; and Retired Staff Major Maḥmūd ad-Durrah.

[5]*Rose al-Yūsef* (Cairo), Nos. 1979-1981 of 16, 23, and 30 May 1966, pp. 15-17, 26-29, and 26-27, respectively.

[6]Obviously, among others, from the letter of resignation addressed to ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim on 26 March 1959 by Fā’iq as-Sāmarrā’ī, ambassador of Iraq to the United Arab Republic.

[7]Retired Colonel Ṣabīḥ ‘Alī Ghālib, *Qiṣṣat Thawrat Arba‘ta‘shar Tammūz wa-ḍ-Ḍubbāt al-Aḥrār* (The Story of the 14 July Revolution and of the Free Officers”) (Beirut, 1968).

[8]Statements of Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, Colonel Rif‘at al-Ḥājj Sirrī, Staff Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, Colonel Waṣfī Ṭāher, Staff Major Jāsim Kāḍhim al-‘Azzāwī, Staff Major Ṣubḥī ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, Staff Major ‘Abd-us-Sattār ‘Abd-ul-Laṭīf, Staff Brigadier Nājī Ṭāleb, Colonel Taher Yaḥya, and Staff Colonel ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref in: Ministry of Defence, Supreme Command of the Armed Forces, *Muḥākamāt al-Maḥkamat al-‘Askariyyah al-‘Ulyā al-Khāṣṣah* (“Proceedings of the Special Supreme Military Tribunal”) (1959) V, *passim*.

[9]The details in regard to the way in which ‘Āref was accepted into the Free Officers movement given by Staff Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, *ibid*., pp. 2004-2005, are now definitely known to have been manufactured.

[10]Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, Colonel Shakīb al-Faḍlī, and Brigadier ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Farḥān.

[11]Unpublished reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd; and conversation with the colonel in February 1962.

[12]One dīnār = £1.

[13]The text of his will was published in the clandestine *Nashrat Ṭalabat-il-‘Iraq al-Aḥrār* (Bulletin of the Free Students of Iraq), No. 1 of January 1960, p. 7.

[14]Midfa‘ī was his maternal uncle.

[15]A Qur‘ānic verse.

[16]*Nashrat Ṭalabat-il-‘Iraq al-Aḥrār*, No. 1 of January 1960, p. 7.

[17]*Ibid*., p. 6.

[18]Staff Colonel Ṣālāḥ-ud-Dīn as-Ṣabbāgh, *Fursān-ul-‘Urūbah tī-l-‘Irāq* (The Heroes of Arabism in Iraq) (1956), pp. 9-10.

[19]Apart from the few Ba‘thī and Communist Free Officers, the movement would by 1958 embrace a substantial group of Iraqist Free Officers, of whom Qāsim would in time become the chief spokesman.

[20]Reference to this circle is made in “The Memoirs of ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref,” *Rose al-Yūsef*, No. 1979 of 16 May 1966, p. 16, and in a statement by the Communist Staff Major Salīm al-Fakhrī on 31 December 1958, in the course of ‘Āref’s trial before the Special Supreme Military Tribunal. See Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākaniāt al-Maḥkamat al-‘Askariyyah al-‘Ulyā al-Khāṣṣah*, V, 2150.

[21]The camp of ar-Rashīd is to the southeast and that of al-Washshāsh to the west of Baghdād. The camp of al-Musayyib lies about 60 kilometers to the south of the capital. The air force quarters are within ar-Rashīd camp.

[22]Unpublished reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majid.

[23]This camp is in Diyālah province.

[24]Conversations with Colonel Shakīb al-Faḍlī in May 1967 and with Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd in February 1967.

[25]Unpublished reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd.

[26]Conversations with Colonel Shakīb al-Faḍlī and Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd.

[27]Unpublished reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd.

[28]In his reminiscences, Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd quotes the oath from memory.

[29]Unpublished reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd.

[30]Conversation with Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, February 1967.

[31]Conversation with Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, February 1962.

[32]A camp about 95 kilometers northeast of Baghdād.

[33]A camp about 140 kilometers northeast of Baghdād.

[34]Conversations with Colonel Shakīb al-Fadlī, May 1967; Retired Major General Fū’ād ‘Āref, August 1968; ‘Abd-ur-Rahmān Maḥmūd Rḥayyem, a longtime close personal friend of ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref, October 1968; and Retired General ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, ex-president of Iraq, February 1970.

[35]*Rose al-Yūsef*, No. 1979 of 16 May 1966, p. 17.

[36]*Rose al-Yūsef*, No. 1980 of 23 May 1966, p. 26.

[37]Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt al-Maḥkamat al-‘Askariyyah al-‘Ulyā al-Khāṣṣah*, V, 2001.

[38]*Ibid*., p. 2086.

[39]Mention of this fact is made in Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd’s unpublished reminiscences.

[40]Conversation with Colonel Shakīb al-Faḍlī.

[41]See the letter of resignation addressed to ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim on 26 March 1959 by Fā’iq as-Sāmarrā’ī, ambassador of Iraq to the United Arab Republic in *Kutub Qawmiyyah* (Nationalist Books), No. 10 (Cairo, 1959), p. 9.

[42]*Rose al-Yūsef*, No. 1980 of 23 May 1966, p. 27.

[43]Unpublished reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd and statement of Staff Brigadier Nājī Ṭāleb before the Special Supreme Military Tribunal in *Muḥākaniāt al-Maḥkamah al-‘Askariyyah al-‘Ulyā al-Khāṣṣah*, V, 2089.

[44]The point made in the text with regard to the place of birth of the members of the committee should be read in connection with the remarks on pp. 765, 998, and 1088.

[45]Conversation with Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd.

[46]Internal Iraqi Communist party manuscript written in 1954 and entitled “The Iraqi Army,” pp. 22-27.

[47]*Ḥurriyat-ul-Waṭan* (“The Freedom of the Homeland”) (organ of “The Union of Soldiers and Officers”), Year 1, No. 2 of late January 1955; and Year 2, No. 1 of 2 April 1956; unpublished reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd; and 1963 statement of Brigadier Ibrahīm Ḥusain in Iraqi Police File No. QS/5.

[48]Internal Iraqi Communist party manuscript written in 1954 and entitled “The Iraqi Army,” p. 28.

[49]Appeal of the National Committee of the Union of Soldiers and Officers of 30 January 1955.

[50]For Waṣfī Ṭāher, see Table 41-2.

[51]For Khairī, see Table 14-2.

[52]1963 statement of Kamāl ‘Umar Naḍhmī to Ba‘thī Investigators in Iraqi Police File No. QS/119; statement of Colonel Fāḍīl ‘Abbās al-Mahdāwī at a session of the Special Supreme Military Tribunal held on 5 September 1959 in *Muḥākamāt*, XIX, 7604; statement of Staff Brigadier Ismā‘īl ‘AIī before the tribunal in 1958, *ibid*., II, 481; conversations with Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd and with Kāmil ach-Chādirchī in February 1962; and ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh (member of the Central Committee of the Communist party), “The Front of National Union before the Revolution,” *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, Year 2, No. 143 of 17 July 1960, p. 8.

[53]Unpublished reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd; and conversations with Fū’ād ar-Rikābī, secretary of the Ba‘th party in the fifties, and with Kāmil ach-Chādirchī and Muḥammad

Ḥadīd, chairman and deputy chairman, respectively, of the National Democratic party.

[54]Unpublished reminiscences of Engineer Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd.

[55]Staff Colonel ‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Amīn, a member of the Supreme Committee, referred to this plan in a statement before the Special Supreme Military Tribunal on 27 December 1958. See Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, V, 2013-2014.

[56]Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, V, 2179, 1993, 2014, and 2089-2090; unpublished reminiscences of Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd; conversations with the latter and with Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd; and Ghālib, *Qiṣṣat*, pp. 65 ff., and 76 ff.

[57]Lt. Fāleḥ Ḥanḍhal, *Asrār Maqtal-il-‘Āilat-il-Mālikah fī-l-‘Irāq* (“The Secrets of the Death of the Royal Family in Iraq”) (Beirut?, 1971), pp. 93 ff., and 137. Perhaps it is necessary here to call to mind what the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers had decided as regards the fate of the king and prince (see p. 795). On the other hand, it should also be remembered that many of the decisions of the committee were simply ignored by Qāsim and ‘Āref.

[58]These words were omitted in the subsequent rebroadcasts of the proclamation.

[59]These words were added to the proclamation after the new government took fright at the violence of the crowds.

[60]“The Memoirs of ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref,” *Rose al-Yūsef*, No. 1980 of 23 May 1966, pp. 28-29 and No. 1981 of 30 May 1966, p. 26; statement made by ‘Āref on 31 December 1958 before the Special Supreme Military Tribunal, *Muḥākamāt*, V, 2179; conversations with Colonel Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd, Staff Brigadier Muḥyī-d-Dīn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, and Retired Staff Major Maḥmūd ad-Durrah; Ghālib, *Qiṣṣat*, pp. 76 ff.; and *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah* (Iraq’s Official Gazette), No. 1 of 23 July 1958.

[61]1963 statement of Kamāl ‘Umar Naḍhmī, the Communist representative in the Front of National Union in Iraqi Police File No. QS/119; and conversations with ach-Chādirchī, Muḥammad Ḥadīd, Ḥusain Jamīl, Ṣiddīq Shanshal, and Fū’ād ar-Rikābī.

[62]See p. 827.

[63]See pp. 824 ff.

[64]Communist Party of Iraq, *Fī Sabīl Ṣiyānat Makāsib-ith-Thawrah wa Ta'zīz Jumhūriyyatina-l-'lrāqiyyah* ("For the Sake of Preserving the Gains of the Revolution and Buttressing Our Iraqi Republic") (undated), pp. 1-2.

[65]W. J. Gallman, *Iraq under General Nūrī*, p. 205.

[66]Qāsim said on 9 August 1958: "If we believed that the people were in a position to remove the incubus of injustice [that weighed upon them], we would not have interfered with armed force but we knew that the people were helpless and without defense." See Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Leader . . . 1958* (in Arabic), pp. 17-18. He gave expression to the same thought also on 4 September 1958. See *ibid*., p. 36.

42 "Sole Leader," Dual Power

[1]Articles 21 and 22 of the provisional constitution. The power of making laws was to be exercised with the approval of the Sovereignty Council.

[2]See pp. 797 ff.

[3]See pp. 799-800.

[4]See p. 796.

[5]1 dūnum = 0.618 acre.

[6]The figure was obtained from the Ministry of Agrarian Reform.

[7]*Al-Bilād* (Baghdād), No. 5275 of 25 July 1958, p. 4.

[8]Conversation with ar-Rikābī in Cairo in January 1962, and with Ḥammādī in Beirut in September 1968.

[9]For a definition of these categories of membership, turn to p. 1010.

[10]Conversation with ar-Rikābī, January 1962.

[11]"The Memoirs of 'Abd-us-Salām 'Āref," *Rose al-Yūsef* of 30 May 1966, p. 27.

[12]*Aj-Jumhūriyyah* (Baghdād) of 22 July 1958, p. 1.

[13]See, e.g., *Al-Bilād* (Baghdād) of 27, 28, 31 July and of 4, 6, 8, 16, and 27 August 1958, pp. 4, 1, 1, 8, 1, 1, 1, and 8, respectively.

[14]*Ibid*., 6 August 1958, p. 1.

[15]*Ibid*., 8 August 1958, p. 1.

[16]See, e.g., *ibid*., 16, 20, and 27 August 1958, pp. 1, 1, and 8, respectively.

[17]*Al-Ḥayāt* (Beirut), No. 3765 of 27 July 1958.

[18]Conversation with Fū'ād ar-Rikābī, ex-secretary of Ba'th party, February 1967.

[19]See p. 843.

[20]Conversation with Kāmel ach-Chādirchī and Muḥammad Ḥadīd of the National Democratic party.

[21]K. Marx and F. Engels, *Selected Works* (Moscow 1962), II, 332.

[22]Article 9 of the association's Program. A copy of the program is in the Police dossier entitled "Al-Ḥizb al-Ḥurr al-Lādīnī" ("The Anti-Religious Liberal Party").

[23]Article 4 of the rules of the association. A copy of the rules is in the same police dossier.

[24]Article 3 and 9 of the rules.

[25]See pp. 1154-1155.

[26]Iraqi Political Police, *Abstract of Intelligence of 1932*, para. 1058 of 14 December 1932.

[27]A Russian translation of this resolution is in L. Madyar, and others, *Programmnye Dokumenty Kommunisticheskikh Partii Vostoka* ("Programme-Documents of the Communist Parties of the East") (Moscow, 1934), pp. 160-169.

[28]*Ibid*., p. 167.

[29]*Al-Qā'idah*, Year 1, No. 8 of September 1943, p. 5.

[30]*Ibid*., p. 8.

[31]E. Zhukov, "Questions of the National and Colonial Struggle after the Second World War," *Voprosy Ekonomiki*, No. 9 of 1949, p. 58.

[32]For the resolution on Arab unity adopted at the Second Party Conference held in 1956, see pp. 750-751.

[33]See the 7 May 1956 decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Syria and Lebanon on “The Policy of the Communist Party and Its Tasks in Syria” in *An-Nūr* (Damascus), No. 106 of 17 May 1956, p. 3.

[34]The Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party, *Internal Circular on Our Political Attitude toward Communism* (in Arabic), January 1956, pp. 1-3 and 24. The circular was penned by Michel ‘Aflaq and Jamāl al-Atāsī.

[35]For an account of the events from the standpoint of the “neutralist” grouping of officers, see Lieutenant Colonel Aḥmad ‘Abd-ul-Karīm (head of the Third Bureau [Operations] in 1957), *Lights on the Experiment of the Union* (in Arabic) (Damascus, 1962), especially pp. 80 ff. For a highly informative discussion, sympathetic to the Ba‘th, see Patrick Seale, *The Struggle for Syria* (London, 1965), pp. 307 ff.

[36]The Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party (a publication for party members only), *Text of the Report Submitted by the Preparatory Committee to the Provisional Party Conference of the Syrian Region on 9 July 1957 on the Situation in the Party and on the Tasks of the Transitional Stage*. First discussion, entitled “The Crisis of the Party–A General View” (in Arabic), pp. 1-7.

[37]The Institution of *Al-Ahrām*, *Transcript of the Unity Talks* (in Arabic) (Cairo, 1963), p. 73.

[38]Michel ‘Aflaq, the secretary general of the Ba‘th, said on 23 October 1968 in the presence of this writer that the proposal to dissolve the party came as a shock to him.

[39]*An-Nūr* (official organ of the party) of 31 December 1957.

[40]Iraqi Police File entitled “The Syrian Communist Party.”

[41]For the text of the note see ‘Abd-ul-Karīm, *Light on the Experiment of the Union*, pp. 92-97.

[42]See *An-Nahār* (Beirut) of 15 and 19 January 1958.

[43]*An-Nahār* of 15 January 1958.

[44]*An-Nūr* of 15 January 1958.

[45]*Aj-Jarīdah* (Beirut) of 29 January 1958.

[46]‘Abd-ul-Karīm, *Light on the Experiment of the Union*, p. 208.

[47]*An-Nūr* of 3 February 1958.

[48]*Al-Akhbār* of 10 June 1962, p. 2.

[49]See in this connection the observations of Amīn al-A‘war, an ex-leader of the Lebanese Communist party in *Al-Muḥarrer* (Beirut) of 3 August 1967, p. 5.

[50]Conversations with Fū’ād ar-Rikābī in Cairo in January 1962, and with Kāmel ach-Chādirchī in Baghdād in February 1962; ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj (candidate member of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist party), *Where Do They Stand and Where Iraq Stands* (in Arabic) (1959), p. 12.

[51]*Al-Bilād* (Baghdād), No. 5289 of 9 August 1958.

[52]At that time it was still describing ‘Āref as “the hero” and “the Messenger of the Revolution.”

[53]Republic of Iraq, *The Revolution of July 14 in its First Year* (in Arabic), p. 260.

[54]Memorandum of the Iraqi Communist party to Premier ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim submitted on 14 July 1958. See Iraqi Communist Party, *For the Sake of Preserving the Gains of the Revolution and Buttressing Our Iraqi Republic* (in Arabic), p. 8.

[55]Statement of the Iraqi Communist party to the Iraqi people on 14 July 1958. See Iraqi Communist Party, *For the Sake of Preserving the Gains of the Revolution and Buttressing Our Iraqi Republic* (in Arabic), p. 4.

[56]The Politbureau of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party, “Statement of the Iraqi Communist Party Concerning Union with the U.A.R. and the Yemen” (in Arabic), (Baghdād, 3 September 1958).

[57]The lecture, entitled “The Historical Road to the Unity of the Arab Nation,” was delivered in the Hall of the People in Baghdād on 13 February 1959, and was published in *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, Nos. 19-21 and 23-26 of 16-18 and 22-25 February 1959, respectively.

[58]Communiqué by Qāsim in *Al-Bilād*, No. 5340 of 5 November 1958.

[59]For the Mosul revolt, turn to Chapter 44.

[60]Conversation with Sa‘dūn Ḥammādī of the Ba‘th party, September 1968.

[61]Statement by al-Mahdāwī at Rashīd ‘Ālī’s trial in Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, V, 1939. A person close to Rashīd ‘Alī, who

prefers to remain unnamed, confirmed, in a conversation with this writer, the accuracy of al-Mahdāwī's statement.

[62]Gallman, *Iraq Under General Nūrī*, p. 206.

[63]Quoted in Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, V, 1855.

[64]For these speeches and others in a similar vein, see *Al-Bilād*, No. 5277, 5278, 5280, 5284, 5286, 5287, 5289, 5296, 5307 of 27, 28, and 31 July, and 4, 6, 7, 9, 16, and 27 August 1958, respectively.

[65]Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, V, 2127.

[66]*Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, No. 1 of 23 November 1958.

[67]Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, V, 2181.

[68]Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, V, 2012.

[69]*Ibid*., V, 2005 and 2132.

[70]Compare *ibid*., V, 2194 with XVIII, 7223 and XIX, 7587.

[71]"The Memoirs of 'Abd-us-Salām 'Āref," *Rose al-Yūsef*, No. 1981 of 30 May 1966, p. 28.

[72]February 1963 statement of Retired Brigadier Ḥasan 'Abbūd Ibrahīm in Iraqi Police File No. QS/87.

[73]February 1963 statement of the Communist Brigadier Ibrahīm Ḥusain aj-Jubūrī in Iraqi Police File No. QS/5.

[74]Conversation, February 1964.

[75]Conversation, February 1967.

[76]For text of speech, see *Al-Waqāi' al-Irāqiyyah*, No. 44 of 30 September 1958, p. 1.

[77]See, e.g., Republic of Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Leader 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim 1959* (in Arabic), p. 108; and *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Righteous Son of the People, the Leader 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim* (in Arabic), *1959*, Part II, p. 135; and *1960*, pp. 491 and 504.

[78]One dūnum = 0.618 acre.

[79]Article 1 of the Agrarian Reform Law. For text of law see *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 44 of 30 September 1958.

[80]Article 6 of the law.

[81]The figures were obtained from the Ministry of Agrarian Reform in February 1964.

[82]Articles 11-12 of the law.

[83]Iraq, Ministry of Agrarian Reform, *Achievements During the Period 30 September 1958-30 September 1963* (in Arabic), mimeographed, schedule on p. 1.

[84]Compare Article 12 of Income Tax Law No. 85 of (20 June) 1956 in *Al-Waqāi‘ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 3828 of 12 July 1957 with Article 13 of Income Tax Law No. 95 of (3 June) 1959 in *Al-Waqāi‘ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 184 of 13 June 1959.

[85]See Articles 2 and 3 of Estate and Inheritance Tax Law No. 157 of (September 29) 1959 in *Al-Waqāi‘ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 243 of 12 October 1959.

[86]Articles 1-6 of Law No. 17 of (March 14) 1961 Amending Estate and Inheritance Tax Law No. 157 of 1959 in *Al-Waqāi‘ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 499 of 22 March 1961.

[87]Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Leader ‘Ahd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, 1959* (in Arabic), p. 91.

[88]Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Righteous Son of the People . . . 1960* (in Arabic), p. 492.

[89]See Article 4 of the law as amended by Article 1 of Law No. 51 of 1956 in *Al-Waqāi‘ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 3636 of 9 June 1955, and No. 3807 of 18 June 1956.

[90]See Article 2 of the law in *Al-Waqāi’ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 3825 of 7 July 1956.

[91]See Article 8 of the law in *Al-Waqāi’ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 520 of 4 May 1961.

[92]See Article 3 of the law in *Al-Waqāi’ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 578 of 18 September 1961.

[93]This concern found reflection recurrently in his speeches, see, e.g., Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Leader . . . 1958* (in Arabic), pp. 24, 29, 62; and *1959*, pp. 22, 26, 34, 49, 51, 65-66, and 78-79.

[94]*Ibid., 1960*, p. 55.

[95]*Ittiḥād -ush-Sha‘b*, 9 July 1959.

[96]The text of the appeal was published in *Al-Fajr-uj-Jadīd* (Baghdad), 24 February, 1963.

[97]Articles 2-4 of Rents' Control Law No. 6 of (6 August) 1958 in *Al-Waqāi'al-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 7 of 9 August 1958.

[98]1000 fils = 1 dīnār = £ 1.

[99]Republic of Iraq, *The July 14 Revolution in its First Year* (in Arabic), p. 197; and Muḥammad Ḥadīd, conversation, February 1962.

[100]Government statement in *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 14 of 17 August 1958, p. 7.

[101]Article 7 of Law No. 82 of 1958 Amending Labor Law No. 1 of 1958, in *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 99 of 24 December 1958.

[102]Article 2 of Law No. 84 of 1958 Obliging Owners of Industrial Establishments to Build Houses for Workers, *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 101 of 28 December 1958.

[103]Iraq, *The July 14 Revolution in its First Year* (in Arabic), pp. 320 ff.

[104]Article 18 of Law No. 82 of 1958.

[105]Article 41 of Agrarian Reform Law, *Al-Waqāi' al-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 44 of 30 September 1958.

[106]In a speech on July 14 1960 (Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches . . . of Qāsim*,[in Arabic], p. 281), Qāsim said that in 1958-1960 25,000 houses were built for the poor and for people of limited income.

[107]E.g., Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Leader. . . 1958*, p. 35; *1959*, pp. 79, 81, 88, and 91; and *1960*, pp. 491-492 and 504.

[108]Conversation with Staff Brigadier 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, February 1967.

[109]Iraq, *Press Interview between Major-General 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim, the Premier and Mr. Sangal, Assistant Editor of Link, 7* September 1959, p. 12.

[110]He used the phrase in his interview with the N.B.C. representatives on 14 October 1958 (see *B.B.C. Summary of World Broadcasts*, Part IV, No. 681 of 16 October 1958, p. 13); at the Fourth Arab Lawyers Conference on 26 November 1958 (see Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution . . . 1958*, p. 63); and in his address to the Partisans of

Peace on 14 April 1959 (see Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution . . . 1959*, p. 61).

[111]Iraq, *The Historic Address of the Leader of the People to the Graduates of the Reserve College on 2 March, 1959* (in Arabic) (1959), p. 3.

[112]*B.B.C. Summary of World Broadcasts*, Part IV, ME/40/A/2 of 1 June 1959.

[113]Iraq, *The Iraqi Revolution in its Fourth Year*, pp. 441 and 447-449.

[114]These were Brigadier Maḥmūd ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq, Brigadier ‘Abd-uj-Jabbār as-Sa‘dī, and Brigadier ‘Abd-uj-Jabbār Jawād, commanders of the Second Division, the Fourth Armored Division, and the Fifth Division, respectively.

[115]For this law see *Al-Waqāi’ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 104 of 1 January 1959.

[116]Memorandum of 14 July 1958 from the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist party to Premier ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim (Iraqi Communist Party, *For the Sake of Preserving the Gains of the Revolution and Buttressing Our Iraqi Republic* [in Arabic], pp. 7-8).

[117]The Politbureau of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party, *Circular Exclusively for Party Members* (in Arabic), 15 July 1958.

[118]Notice No. 16 by Military Governor General, *Al-Waqaī’ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 1 of 23 July 1958, p. 17.

[119]Article 18 of the Provisional Constitution of 27 July 1958.

[120]Internal Circular of the Communist party issued in 1967 and entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 10.

[121]People’s Resistance Law No. 3 of 1958; *Al-Waqāi’ al-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 4 of 4 August 1958.

[122]Communist party leaflet entitled “Appeal to the People,” 6 August 1958.

[123]Statement by Staff Colonel Shāker Alī, commander of the Resistance, quoted in *Al-Ḥayāt* (Beirut) of 22 August 1958.

[124]Internal Communist circular issued in 1967 and entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 10.

[125]This account is based on information given me in February 1964 by Sālim ‘Ubaid an-Nu‘mān, a veteran Communist and in the forties a principal collaborator of Fahd.

[126]For discussion of the role and character of ar-Raḍī, al-Ḥaidarī, and ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah, turn to Chapter 37.

[127]Politbureau of the Iraqi Communist Party, “Summary of the Proceedings of the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party held in Early September 1958” in internal party publication entitled *In the Interest of a Full Comprehension of the Policy of the Party* (1958) (in Arabic). For an English translation of this report, see *Iraqi Review*, I, Nos. 5, 7, 9, and 12 of 25 June, 9 July, 30 July, and 23 August 1959. For the quotations in the text, see *Iraqi Review* of 30 July 1959, p. 8; and of 23 August 1959, p. 5.

[128]See p. 899.

[129]See p. 808.

[130]Politbureau of the Iraqi Communist Party, “Summary of the Proceedings of the Plenum of the Central Committee . . . held in Early September 1958,” *Iraqi Review*, I, No. 9 of 30 July 1959, p. 8.

[131]For a summarized version of the covenant in question, see B.B.C. No. 710 of 19 November 1958, p. 10. For the full text see *Al-Bilād*, No. 5361 of 26 November 1958.

[132]Conversation with this writer, February 1967.

[133]Letter of resignation addressed to Qāsim on 26 March 1959 by Fā’iq as-Sāmarrā’ī, ambassador of Iraq to the U.A.R., published in No. 10 of the series entitled “National Books” (Cairo, 1959), p. 18.

[134]For this program, see p. 861.

[135]*Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār* of 31 December 1958.

[136]*Al-Bilād of* 31 December 1958; and B.B.C. No. 747 of 6 January 1959, p. II.

[137]Statement given by Kamāl ‘Umar Naḍhmī in February 1963 to Ba‘thī investigating officers, Iraqi Police File No. QS/119; conversation in August 1968 with Staff Major General Fū’ād ‘Āref, a classmate of Qāsim and holder of ministerial portfolios under Qāsim, the Ba‘th, and ‘Āref; and conversation in February 1962 with Kāmel ach-Chādirchī.

[138]*Al-Bilād,* No. 5401 of 16 January 1959.

[139]The question of restraining the Popular Resistance had been brought up at the divisional commanders' meeting of 29 December 1958. See statements made on 23 August and 3 September 1959 before the "People's Court" by Staff Brigadier Nāḍhim aṭ-Ṭabaqchaī and Staff Brigadier ʻAzīz al-ʻUqailī, both nationalists and at the time of the meeting commanders of the Second and First Division, respectively; Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt,* XVIII, 7227; and XIX, 7588.

[140]This exception derived from the relatively strong influence enjoyed by the nationalists at Mosul.

[141]*Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār,* No. 53 of 17 January 1959.

[142]*Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb,* No. 1 of 25 January 1959.

[143]*Ibid*.

[144]*Pravda* and *Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb* of 3 February 1959.

[145]*Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb* of 9, 16, 17, and 22 February 1959.

43 Mutual Antagonism, Mutual Defeat

[1]*Al-Akhbār* (Beirut), 14 December 1958. Bakdāsh recapitulated the program in a speech on 2 February 1959 before the Twenty-first Congress of the C.P.S.U., *Pravda,* 3 February 1959; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb,* 4 February 1959.

[2]The program called for the creation "by democratic means on the basis of universal and absolutely free elections" of "a parliament and government for the Syrian region and a parliament and government for the Egyptian region, in addition to a central parliament and government for national defense, foreign affairs, and other common matters."

[3]*Al-Ahrām* (Cairo), 24 December 1958.

[4]Amīn al-Aʻwar in an article in *Al-Muḥarrer* (Beirut) of 3 August 1967.

[5]*Pravda,* 28 January 1959.

[6]*Al-Ahrām,* 28 January 1959.

[7]*Al-Ahrām* of 29 January 1959.

[8]*Pravda* of 19 February 1959, p. 4.

[9]The exchange was revealed in Nāṣir's speech of February 21, *Al-Ahrām* of February 22, 1959.

[10]Nāṣir's speeches of 11 and 13 March at Damascus, *Al-Ahrām*, 12 and 14 March 1959.

[11]*Pravda*, 17 March 1959; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 18 March 1959.

[12]*Al-Ahrām*, 17 March 1959.

[13]This is according to the *New York Times* of 20 March 1959, but in the version of the conference published by *Pravda* only these words occurred: "He is still a young president, and passionate."

[14]*Al-Ahrām*, 21 May 1959.

[15]The notable exception is the Sudanese Communist party which, incidentally, abstained from attacks upon the U.A.R.

44 Mosul, March 1959

[1]The Albū Muṭaiwit live along the foot of Sinjār Mountain; Shammar between ash-Sharqāt and Sinjār; and al-Gargariyyah to the west of Mosul (consult Map 5).

[2]For the position of the quarters mentioned in the text, see Map 6.

[3]The details which form the basis of the generalizations in the preceding paragraphs were obtained on different occasions from knowledgeable Mosulites of various leanings, most of whom prefer to remain unidentified. They include Muḥammad Ḥadīd, Qāsim's minister of finance; 'Abd-ul-Ghanī Mallāḥ, secretary of the National Democratic party in Mosul; and Dr. Ṣāliḥ al-'Alī, a professor of history at Baghdād University. Some of the facts are also derived from a March 1963 statement by Brigadier Ḥasan 'Abbūd, one-time commander of the Mosul Garrison. Iraqi Police File No. QS/87 has reference.

[4]*Az-Zamān* (Baghdad) of 16 August 1946.

[5]For a description of the murder of Shaikh Sa'īd and his retinue, see letter of Vice Consul Wilkie Young, Mosul, to Sir G. A. Lowther, Constantinople, of 14 January 1909, in British Record Office File FO 195/2308 of 1909.

[6]I.e., the holders of *ṭāpū* land. *Ṭāpū* is a type of permanent, heritable, and transferable land tenure.

[7]I.e., the system of registration of *ṭāpū* land.

[8]Great Britain, *Administration Report of the Mosul Division for 1919*, p. 21.

[9]One dūnum = 0.618 acre.

[10]Al1 the figures cited in this paragraph were obtained from the Ministry of Agrarian Reform in February 1964.

[11]Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, XVIII, 7315-7316 and independent investigations of this writer.

[12]Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, XVIII, 6916-6917.

[13]The figure was obtained from the Ministry of Agrarian Reform.

[14]For sources, see n. 3 above. Also conversation with Ḥusain al-Ḥallāq, an Ismā‘īlī Syrian from Salmiyyah, who was deputed by the Ba‘th command in Baghdād to prepare the Mosul branch for the impending revolt.

[15]See Fū’ād ar-Rikābī (secretary of the Ba‘th party), *Al-Ḥall-ul-Awḥad* (“The Sole Solution”) (Cairo, 1963), pp. 28-29.

[16]For this last point, see Retired Staff Major Maḥmūd ad-Durrah (who played a part in the events being described), “The Mosul ‘Revolution’ after Seven Years” (in Arabic), *Dirāsāt ‘Arabiyyah* (“Arab Studies”) (Beirut), Year 2, No. 6, April 1966, pp. 58-59.

[17]See *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* of 11 March 1959.

[18]This is based on information given me by a reliable ex-officer from Mosul who does not wish to be identified.

[19]The secretary, ‘Abd-ul-Ghanī Mallāḥ, a merchant, cited the figure in a conversation with this writer on 15 August 1966.

[20]For the population of Mosul, see Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Statistical Abstract, 1959*, p. 40.

[21]For the strength of the People’s Resistance Force in Mosul, see statement by ‘Umar Muḥammad Ilyās, member of the Mosul Party Committee, *Ittiḥad-ush-Sha‘b* of 29 March 1959.

[22]For Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb, see Table 19-1.

[23]My source for this is an army officer. I was, however, unable to trace the relevant decision in *Al-Waqāi‘ al-Irāqiyyah*.

[24]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* of 23 February 1959.

[25]*Ibid*., 6 March 1959.

[26]*Ibid*., 27 February 1959.

[27]*Ibid*., 2 March 1959.

[28]‘Abd-ul-Ghanī Mallāḥ, the secretary of the Mosul Branch of the National Democratic party, relates in his book *At-Tajribah Ba‘d Arba‘ta‘shar Tammūz* (“The Experience after July 14”), p. 23, that the Security Officer, Mosul, told him at the time that he had received definite instructions to prop up the Left, but that “the National Democrats refused to participate in this plan.”

[29]Statement to Ba‘thī investigating officers in February 1963 by Mahdī Ḥamīd, a member of the Communist party and commander of the People’s Resistance Force at Mosul. Iraqi Police File No. QS/87 refers.

[30]Ad-Durrah, “The Mosul ‘Revolution,’ ” p. 55.

[31]*Al-Bilād* and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* of 8 March 1959; and Rashīd Badr (a nationalist), *Majzarat-ul-Mūṣil* (“The Massacre at Mosul”) (Cairo, 1960), p. 18.

[32]For aj-Jubūrī and Ḥamīd, see Table 44-2.

[33]For Habbālah, see Table 44-2.

[34]February 1963 statement to Ba‘thī investigators of Sāmī Bashīr Ḥabbābah, member of the Communist party and of the Mosul People’s Resistance Force. Iraqi Police File No. QS/26 has reference. Also *Al-Bilād* of 13 March 1959 and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* of 11 and 18 March 1959.

[35]*Al-Ahrām* (Cairo) of 9 March 1959.

[36]For other biographical details about ash-Shawwāf, consult Table 41-2.

[37]Ad-Durrah, “The Mosul ‘Revolution,’ “p. 53.

[38]Statement of Colonel Rif‘at al-Ḥājj Sirrī on 5 September 1959, see Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt,* XIX, 7689-7690. Sirrī’s statement has been confirmed to this writer by ‘Abd-ul-Fattāḥ Ibrahīm, well-known leftist leader and brother of leftist Lt. Col. Mūsa Ibrahīm, who knew ash-Shawwāf well and did service under him.

[39]Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, XVIII, 499.

[40]Ad-Durrah, “The Mosul ‘Revolution,’ ” pp. 56-57.

[41]My authority for this is a well-informed person from Mosul whom I cannot name, who knew Colonel Sirrī well and was very close to ‘Abd-us-Salām ‘Āref. He told me that ad-Durrah was not Sirrī’s emissary, as he represented himself to be, but had literally “thrust himself” upon the movement. Later ad-Durrah claimed that he was actually ṣent by Najīb ar-Rubai‘ī, the president of the Sovereignty Council.

[42]‘Āqrah and ‘Amadiyyah are townlets to the northeast of Mosul. See map 5.

[43]See B.B.C. No. 801 of 10 March 1959, pp. 16-17.

[44]February 1963 statements of Sāmī Bashīr Ḥabbābah, member of the Communist party, and of Mahdī Ḥamīd, commander of the People’s Resistance Forces at Mosul, in Iraqi Police Files No. QS/26 and QS/87; statement of 22 August 1959 by Brigadier Nāḍhim aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī before the Special High Military Tribunal in *Muḥākamāt*, XVIII, 7211-7213; statement by Flight Major Aḥmad Ḥabīb, *ibid*., XII, 4910-4911; Retired Staff Major Maḥmūd ad-Durrah, “The Mosul ‘Revolution,’ “ pp. 58-59; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* of 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, and 23 March 1959.

[45]B.B.C. No. 801 of 10 March 1959.

[46]While these things were in progress, Mahdī Ḥamīd was at Sūmer or Sarjūn Hotel. He had come to Mosul on 5 March with the Baghdād Peace Partisans’ delegation.

[47]February 1963 statement of Mahdī Ḥamīd in Iraqi Police File No. QS/87.

[48]Statement, 17 March 1963 on Iraqi radio and television by ex-Brigadier Ḥasan ‘Abbūd, who succeeded ash-Shawwāf in the command of the Mosul garrison.

[49]March 1963 statement to Ba‘thī investigators by Brigadier Ḥasan ‘Abbūd Ibrahīm. Iraqi Police File No. QS/87 refers.

[50]*Ibid*.

[51]*Ibid*.

[52]February 1963 statement of Mahdī Ḥamīd in Iraqi Police File No. QS/87.

[53]February 1963 statement of Communist Sāmī Bashīr Ḥabbābah in Iraqi Police File No. QS/26; and Hilāl Nājī (a Ba‘thī), *Ḥatta Lā Nansa* (So That We Would Not Forget) (Cairo, 1960), pp. 7-9.

[54]See text of 26 December 1960 decision of First Martial Court on the Damlamājah incident in *Al-Bayān* (Baghdad) of 28 and 29 December 1960.

[55]February 1963 statement of Mahdī Ḥamīd in Iraqi Police File No. QS/87.

[56]February 1963 statement of Mahdī Ḥamīd in Iraqi Police File No. QS/87; and February 1963 statement of Communist Sāmī Bashīr Ḥabbābah in Iraqi Police File No. QS/26.

[57]March 1963 statement of Brigadier Ḥasan ‘Abbūd Ibrahīm in Iraqi Police File No. QS/87.

[58]*Az-Zamān* (Baghdad) of 28 May 1960.

[59]February 1963 statement of Communist Sāmī Bashīr Ḥabbābah in Iraqi Police File No. QS/26.

[60]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* of 7 March 1960.

[61]The names of the 48 persons are cited in Nājī, *Ḥatta Lā Nansa*, pp. 7-9, 16, 100-105, 112, 114, and 193.

[62]Conversation with Professor Ṣāliḥ al-‘Alī, February 1962.

[63]Conversation with Muḥammad Ḥadīd, February 1964.

45 The Flow

[1]See, e.g., *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 1 March 1959.

[2]Quoted in internal circular of the Iraqi Communist party issued in 1967 and entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 7.

[3]That of Hāshim Jawād, Qāsim’s minister for foreign affairs: conversation, April 1969.

[4]1963 statement by Communist Staff Major Kāmel Muḥsin, Iraqi Police File No. QS/119, and Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, XVIII, 6944; and XIX, 7620. For al-Bayātī and ‘Abd-uj-Jabbār, consult Table 45-1.

[5]For Ṭaha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad, see Table 45-1.

[6]To this writer in February 1967.

[7]The strength of the Communist position in the garrisons mentioned above is deducible from statements made in 1963 to Ba‘thī investigators by various Communist officers. For the names of some of these officers, see Table 45-4. Iraqi Police Files QS/5 and QS/119 refer.

[8]I.e., the coup by the Ba‘thists in 1963. Record of the meeting of the Iraqi Communist party’s Committee for the Organization Abroad held on 19 November 1965 in Prague. For extensive excerpts from this record, see pp. 1048 ff. A copy of the record fell into the hands of the authorities and was made available to this writer by the First Branch, Directorate General of Security, Baghdād.

[9]See p. 783.

[10]Statement in 1963 by Sultān Mulla ‘AIī, member of the Communist party’s leading Military Committee, in Iraqi Police Files No. QS/5 and QS/120.

[11]Conversation in September 1967 with Ṭāleb Shabīb, member of the Ba‘th Command and of the Ba‘th Military Bureau and minister for foreign affairs in 1963; and interview in March 1963 with Ḥusain Jamīl of the National Democratic party.

[12]See p. 849.

[13]Conversation with Mr. Hāshim Jawād, Qāsim's minister for foreign affairs, April 1969. Edouard Sablier in *Le Monde* of 28 May 1959 estimated the size of the force at 50,000, and *The New York Times* of 7 May at 35,000, but these figures are clearly wide of the mark.

[14]1963 statement by Captain Iḥsān Mahdī al-Bayātī, a Communist and a commander of the Resistance, Iraqi Police File No. QS/119.

[15]For Mahdī Ḥamīd see Table 44-2.

[16]Jawād Kāḍhim was identified as a Communist by Communist Staff Colonel ʻAlī Khālid, Iraqi Police File No. QS/119 refers.

[17]Luṭfī Ṭāher was identified as a Communist also by Staff Colonel ʻAIī Khālid. Hāshim Jawād told this writer that Ṭāher admitted in his presence that he was a Communist.

[18]For Zhū Nūrī Ayyūb, see Table 19-1.

[19]Iraq, *The July 14 Revolution in its First Year* (in Arabic) (1959), p. 254. This publication was put out when the Communists still enjoyed strong influence in the government.

[20]Conversation, Sālim ʻUbaid an-Nuʻmān, February 1964.

[21]Conversation, September 1964, with Hānī al-Fkaikī, member of the Baʻth Command in 1963.

[22]*Iraqi Review*, 30 July 1959.

[23]Conversation, Dr. Rose Khaddūrī, February 1964.

[24]World Federation of Democratic Youth, *Iraqi Youth. Their Movement and Tasks* (Budapest, 1964), pp. 13-14.

[25]Statement of Zakī Khairī, member of Politbureau, in *Iraqi Review*, 11 June 1959.

[26]*Iraqi Review*, 23 July 1959.

[27]*Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb*, 24 May 1959.

[28]Excerpts from the memorandum were published in an article by Bahā'-ud-Dīn Nūrī , member of the Politbureau, in *Ittiḥād-ush-Shaʻb* of 10 May 1959.

[29]Iraqi Communist party, internal circular entitled "An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965" ("An unofficial appraisal made by a number of comrades and by decision of the plenum of the Central Committee, held

in February 1967, presented for consideration by the cadres of the party and its leading bodies") (in Arabic), p. 12.

[30]Conversation with Hāshim Jawād, Qāsim's minister for foreign affairs, February 1967.

[31]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 28 April 1959.

[32]*The New York Times*, 29 April 1959.

[33]Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Leader 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim 1959* (in Arabic), p. 80.

[34]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 4 May 1959.

[35]The cry, it would appear, had not been among the authorized slogans, but was raised during the demonstration on the initiative of militant elements in the party command: conversation with a member of the Baghdād Local Committee of the Communist party who wishes to remain unnamed.

[36]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 6 May 1959.

[37]*Ibid.*, *7* May 1959.

[38]*Ibid*., 8 May 1959.

[39]*The New York Times*, 12 May 1959.

[40]Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Leader* (in Arabic), pp. 89-90.

[41]*Al-Ahālī*, 20 May 1959.

[42]*Ibid*., 8 May 1959.

[43]That ar-Raḍī led the hard-liners and 'Āmer 'Abdallah the moderates I have from a Communist who does not wish to be identified.

[44]Literally: "The ideas opposing. . . ."

[45]By this is meant apparently the secretary of the party.

[46]I.e., at its plenary meeting, which was held in July 1959.

[47]Record of the Meeting of the Iraqi Communist party's Committee for the Organization Abroad held on 19 November 1965 in Prague. A copy of the record fell into the hands of the authorities and was made available to this writer by the First Branch, Directorate General of Security, Baghdād.

[48]E.g., Iraqi Communist party, internal circular entitled "An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July

1958-April 1965" (in Arabic), pp. 12-13.

[49]For al-Azairjāwī, see Table 29-1.

[50]Statement to Ba'thī investigators in 1963 by Communist First Lieutenant Ṭāreq Ṭaha Darwīsh, who was present at the gathering in question. Iraqi Police File No. QS/119 has reference.

[51]For the text of Jilmirān's statement, see Iraq News Agency, *Home News Bulletin* (in Arabic), Fifth Year, Supplement to Issue No. 79 of 28 March 1963.

[52]Conversation, Hāshim Jawād, April 1969.

[53]Iraqi Communist party, internal circular entitled "An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965" (in Arabic), pp. 12-13.

[54]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 20 May 1959.

[55]*Ibid*., 23 May 1959.

[56]Conversation with a member of the Baghdād Local Party Committee who prefers to remain anonymous; and 1967 Communist internal circular entitled "An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965" (in Arabic), p. 16.

[57]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 23 May 1959.

[58]*Ath-Thawrah*, 24 May 1959.

[59]Baghdād Radio, Home Service, 24 May 1959, as quoted by B.B.C. ME/38/A/1 of 29 May 1959.

[60]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 31 May 1959; and B.B.C. ME/40/A/2 of 1 June 1959.

[61]The first anti-Communist radio commentary was broadcast on that day, and drew an attack from 'Azīz al-Ḥājj, member of the Central Committee, *Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, 27 May 1959.

[62]*Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, 12 June 1959.

[63]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 12 June 1959.

[64]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 12 June 1959.

[65]*The Times* (London), 24 June 1959.

[66]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 15 June 1959.

[67]*Ibid*., 16 June 1959.

[68]*Ibid*., 13, 17, and 19 June 1959.

[69]*Ibid*., 15 June 1959.

[70]*Ibid*., 16, 17, and 22 June 1959.

[71]*Al-Ahālī*, 14 June 1959.

[72]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 15 June 1959

[73]Qāsim referred to this incident in his speech of 5 July; see *Al-Bilād, 7* July 1959.

[74]For names of victims and other details, see *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* of 12 and 18 July 1959.

[75]*Ibid*., 22 June 1959.

[76]Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Leader 'Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim* (in Arabic), pp. 116-118, 123-124, 126, and 129.

[77]*Ath-Thawrah*, 24 June 1959; and B.B.C. ME/62/A/10 of 26 June 1959.

[78]*As-Ṣaḥāfah*, 28 June 1959.

[79]The other officers, who apparently held positions under aj-Janābī, were Major Shāker 'Abd-uj-Jabbār al-Khaṭīb, Captains Ḥassūn Aswad az-Zuhairī and Jabbār Khudair al-Ḥaidar, and First Lieutenants Hāshim Mar'ī and Fakhrī 'Abd-ul-Karīm, *Al-Waqāi' al-Irāqiyyah*, No. 202 of 27 July 1959, p. 2.

[80]Articles 1 and 5 of the charter of the Front, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 29 June 1959.

[81]The Politbureau of the Iraqi Communist party, "Circular Restricted to Members," 3 July 1959.

[82]*Al-Bilād*, 5 July 1959.

[83]Text of Qāsim's speech in *ibid., 7* and 9 July 1959.

[84]Conversation in May 1969 with an ex-member of the Baghdād Local Committee of the Communist party who prefers to remain unidentified.

[85]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 10 July 1959; emphasis added.

[86]For this official title of Shahīdī, see *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 19 July 1959.

[87]The *Christian Science Monitor*, 9 July 1959.

[88]New China News Agency Bulletin (English Edition), 17 March 1959.

[89]*Ibid*.,21 April 1959.

[90]See Donald S. Zagoria, *The Sino-Soviet Conflict 1956-1961* (Princeton, 1962), p. 259.

[91]*Al-Bilād*, 14 July 1959; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 18 July 1959.

[92]See *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* of 29 June 1959.

[93]See *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b* of 18 July 1959. The date of the telegram was not indicated, but it should be noted that the paper did not appear from 15 to 17 July on account of the celebration of the first anniversary of the Revolution.

46 Kirkūk, July 1959

[1]Letter No. 497 of 15 July 1959 from the Kirkūk chief of police to the *mutaṣarrif* (governor) of Kirkūk province; letter No. 6433 of 17 July 1959 from the Kirkūk chief of security to the director general of security, Baghdād; letter No. 5725 of 23 June 1963 from the Kirkūk chief of security to the *mutaṣarrif* of Kirkūk; undated letter to Premier Qāsim from the Turkmen leaders Taḥsīn Ra'fat and Retired Colonel Shāker Ṣāber; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha' b* of 4 August and 3 December 1959. The Kirkūk security and police letters referred to in this and other footnotes in this chapter were perused by this writer at the Kirkūk Police Headquarters in February 1964.

[2]For the text of her testimony, see *Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 22 September 1959.

[3]See proceedings of Second Martial Court in *Ath-Thawrah*, 4, 6, and 14 April 1960.

[4]The 1957 official census showed a population of 12t),402, of whom 12,691 were Christians and the remainder Moslem, except for a few hundred Sabeans, Yazīdis, and members of other denominations: Iraq, Ministry of Interior, *Statistical Compilation Relating to the Population Census of 1957* (in Arabic), I, Part IV, 170.

[5]Letter No. 497 of 15 July 1959 from the Kirkūk chief of police to the *mutaṣarrii* of Kirkūk province.

[6]Statement of Brigadier aṭ-Ṭabaqchalī before the "People's Court" on 23 August 1959, Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*. . . XVIII, 7231-7232.

[7]B.B.C. No. 755 of 15 January 1959, p. 8.

[8]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 27 March 1959.

[9]See p. 891 and Table 45-1.

[10]Undated letter to Premier Qāsim from the Turkmen leaders Taḥsīn Ra’fat and Retired Colonel Shāker Ṣāber.

[11]They were respectively Jāsim Maḥmūd as-Su‘ūdī and Nūrī al-Khayyāt, both Arabs, but the first tepidly for and the other warmly against the Communists.

[12]Letter No. 497 of 15 July 1959 from the Kirkūk chief of police to the *mutaṣarrif* of Kirkūk province.

[13]Letter No. 6433 of 17 July 1959 from the Kirkūk chief of security to the director general of security, Baghdād.

[14]Letter No. 497 of 15 July 1959 from the Kirkūk chief of police to the *mutaṣarrif* of Kirkūk province.

[15]Letter No. 6433 of 17 July 1959 from the Kirkūk chief of security to the director general of security, Baghdād.

[16]For this testimony see *Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 22 September 1959.

[17]better No. 6857 of 27 July 1959 from the chief of security of Kirkūk to the Directorate General of Security, Baghdād.

[18]Letter No. 6694 of 20 July 1959 from the Kirkūk chief of security to the Directorate General of Security, Baghdād.

[19]*Al-Bilād*, 30 July 1959; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 30 July 1959.

[20]Letter No. 6857 of 27 July 1959 from the Kirkūk chief of security to the Directorate General of Security, Baghdād.

[21]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 4 August 1959.

[22]His letter No. 6694 of 20 July 1959 to the Directorate General of Security, Baghdād.

[23]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 5 August 1959.

[24]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 3 December 1959; and *Iraqi Review*, I, No. 20, 23 December 1959.

[25]Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Faithful Son of the People, the Leader ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Qāsim* (in Arabic), 11(1959), pp. 44, 47.

[26]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘ b* and *Al-Bilād* of 30 July and 3 August 1959; and B.B.C. ME/92/A/1 of 31 July and ME/95/A/1 of 5 August 1959.

[27]I am not here unquestioningly accepting the explanation given by the Central Committee Plenum of mid-1959. The ex-Communists Sharīf ash-Shaikh and Dāūd aṣ-Ṣayegh confirmed to this writer in February 1964 that this was, in fact, the argument given in the party prior to July 1959 for the command’s silence on the excesses at Mosul.

[28]I.e., Turkmenian nationalists.

[29]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 18 July 1959.

[30]In his speech of 19 July 1959.

[31]For ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh, see Table 37-1.

[32]Statement to Ba‘thī investigators in April 1963 by ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh, member of the Central Committee from 1956 to 1963, in Iraqi Police File QS/26.

[33]*Idem*., and report in summary form of the Plenum of the Central Committee held in mid-July 1959, published in *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* of 3 August 1959.

[34]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 2 August 1959.

[35]*Ibid*., 3 and 23 August 1959.

47 The Ebb

[1]For these responses: conversation with a member of the General Students’ Federation who wishes to remain unnamed.

[2]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 26 and 30 July and 3 August 1959; *Al-Bilād* and *Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, 30 July 1959; *Christian Science Monitor*, 24 July 1959; *Iraqi Review*, 23 August 1959; B.B.C. ME/88/A/1 of 27 July, ME/93/A/4 of 1 August and ME/95/A/1 of 5 August; and World Federation of Democratic Youth, *Iraqi Youth. Their Movement and Tasks*, p. 18.

[3]Iraq, *The Principles of the July 14 Revolution in the Speeches of the Leader* (in Arabic), II (1959), p. 56.

[4]Cf. Article 7 of the old law with Article 3 of the new law: *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 166 of 10 May 1959, and No. 225 of 9 September 1959.

[5]See p. 929.

[6]Conversations with a member of the Baghdād Local Committee of the Communist party, and a member of the Federation of Students who do not wish to be identified.

[7]*The New York Times*, 19 July 1959.

[8]Hilāl Nājī(a member of the Ba‘th party), *Lights on the Regime of ‘Abdul-Karīm Qāsim* (in Arabic) (Cairo, 1962), p. 30; *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 9 September 1959; and *New York Times*, 7 October 1959.

48 The Self-Flagellation

[1]In the resolution, which was adopted at a meeting held in July 1960, the Central Committee took the view that in the first year of the Revolution the party committed only “simple and tactical errors, “but at the same time decided not to publish this appraisal so as to avoid another “self-flagellation”: 1967 internal Communist circular entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 9.

[2]For the “abridged” version, see *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 3 August and *Iraqi Review*, 6 August 1959; for the full version, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 23 August and *Iraqi Review*, 6 September 1959. For a French translation of the full report, see *Orient* (Paris), No. 11, 3^{e}trimestre 1959, pp. 175-221.

[3]Quoted in 1967 internal Communist circular entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), pp. 7-8 and 13-14.

[4]Quoted in 1967 internal Communist circular entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), pp. 6-9 and 13-14.

[5]For this, *ibid*., pp. 16 and 24; and 1963 statement to Ba‘thī investigators by Communist Captain Iḥsān Mahdī al-Bayātī in Iraqi Police File No. QS/119.

[6]*Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb* (“The Party Struggler”-an internal Communist publication), July 1959.

[7]1963 statements by ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh and Sharīf ash-Shaikh, members of the Central Committee, in Iraqi Police File No. QS/26; and conversation with Sharīf ash-Shaikh in Baghdād Central Prison, 9 February 1964.

[8]Conversation with a member of the Baghdād Local Committee of the Communist party who wishes to remain unidentified.

49 The Recovery

[1]See p. 873.

[2]For this statement, see p. 923.

[3]Fū’ād ar-Rikābī (secretary of the Ba‘th party), *Al-Ḥall-ul-Awḥad* (“The Sole Solution”), pp. 30-87; and Iraq, Ministry of Defence, *Muḥākamāt*, XX, 7854-7857.

[4]See article by Michel Abū Jawdah in *An-Nahār* (Beirut), 19 February 1963.

[5]1967 internal Communist circular entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 11.

[6]*Ibid*., p. 24.

[7]1967 internal Communist circular entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), pp. 19-20.

[8]Statement to Ba‘thī investigators by Sa‘d Yaḥya Q. in Iraqi Police Files No. QS/2 and QS/10. Portions of this statement have been quoted, but not altogether faithfully, in the Directorate General of Security’s *Al-Ḥarakat-ush-Shuyū‘iyyah fī-l-‘Irāq* (“The Communist Movement in Iraq”), (Baghdād, 1963), II, 8.

[9]1967 internal Communist circular entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 24.

[10]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 27 and 29 November 1959.

[11]*Ibid*.,12 December 1959.

[12]*Ibid*.,12 November 1959.

[13]*Al-Akhbār*, 13 February 1960.

[14]*Az-Zamān*, 14 February 1960; and *Iraqi Review*, 24 February 1960.

[15]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 11 and 12 November 1959.

[16]*Ibid*., 23 October and 6 December 1959.

[17]*Ibid*,, 16 December 1959.

50 The Bogus Party

[1]Law No. 1 of 1960, *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 283 of 2 January 1960.

[2]The “founding members” included eight members of the Central Committee—Zakī Khairī, Ḥusain ar-Raḍī, ‘Azīz ash-Shaikh, ‘Abd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf, ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah, ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Ismā‘īl, Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd, and Muḥammad Ḥusain Abu-l-‘Īss (see Table 42-6). The other “founding members” were the workers Tawfīq Aḥmad Muḥammad, Ilyās Koharī, and ‘Abd-ul-Amīr ‘Abbās al-‘Abed; the peasants Kāḍhim aj-Jāsim and Aḥmad Mulla Qādir; and the physicians Dr. Khalīl Jamīl Jawād and Dr. Ḥusain al-Wardī.

[3]For texts of notice and accompanying Charter and Rules of Party, *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 10 January 1960; and *Iraqi Review*, 18 and 25 January 1960.

[4]Introduction and Chapter 2 of Charter.

[5]Article 11 of Charter.

[6]Article 7 and Chapter 4.

[7]Article 10.

[8]Chapter 1, Article 2.

[9]Introduction of Charter.

[10]*Ibid*.

[11]Rules of Party, Chapter 1, Article 1.

[12]*Al-Ahālī*, 10 January 1960.

[13]See p. 508, n. 56 and Table 45-1.

[14]See Table 37-1.

[15]*lttiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 12 January 1960.

[16]Conversation on 9 February 1964 in Baghdād Central Prison with Sharīf ash-Shaikh, ex-member of the Central Committee.

[17]Aḥmad Muḥammad Yahya, Qāsim's minister of interior, revealed on 18 January 1964 that aṣ-Ṣāyegh had been on Qāsim's secret payroll.

[18]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 4 December 1959.

[19]*Ibid*.,14 January 1960.

[20]See *Al-Mabda'*, 23 and 30 January 1960.

[21]*Al-Mabda'*, 4, 5, and 6 February 1960; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 4 and 5 February 1960.

[22]For their statement, see *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 4 February 1960.

[23]Their withdrawal left his group with only four "founding members," whereas the Law of Associations required no fewer than ten.

[24]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 10 February 1960. Article by "Abū Sa'īd."

[25]*Ibid*., editorial under title "Explanations."

[26]*lttiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 8 and 9 February 1960.

[27]*Ibid*., 16 February 1960.

[28]*Iraqi Review*, 24 February 1960.

[29]*Al-Bilād*, 17 February 1960.

[30]See Article 19 of the Law: *Al-Waqāi'-ul-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 283 of 2 January 1960.

[31]For text of the minister of interior's letter, see *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 24 February 1960.

[32]Quoted in *L'Orient* (Beirut), 8 March 1960.

[33]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 8 March 1960.

[34]*Ibid*.,1 March 1960.

[35]Text of letter, *ibid*.,10 March 1960.

[36]Statement of Khairī as translated by *Iraqi Review*, 23 March 1960.

[37]The *New York Times*, 1 May 1960.

[38]*Al-Mabda'*, 10 May 1960.

[39]*Ibid*.,28 April and 11 May 1960.

[40]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 19 May 1960.

[41]*Al-Mabda'*, 10 November 1960.

51 From Pillar to Post

[1]Conversation with this writer 15 April 1969.

[2]See *The New York Times*, 21 April 1960.

[3]Conversation, Hāshim Jawād, 15 April 1969.

[4]For the text of his memorandum to the Chief Mechanical Engineer at Schalchiyyah, see *Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 21 April 1960.

[5]*Pravda*, 15 April 1960.

[6]*The New York Herald Tribune*, 13 April 1960.

[7]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 25 April 1960.

[8]*Ibid*.,19 May 1960.

[9]*1 bid*.,3 June 1960.

[10]*Ibid*.,29 July 1960.

[11]*Ibid*.,31 August 1960.

[12]*Ibid*.

[13]*Az-Zamān*, *2* October 1960.

[14]*Ath-Thabāt*, 4 October 1960.

[15]*Al-Hadārah*, 22 October 1960.

[16]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 23 June 1960.

[17]*Al-Ahālī*, *7* November 1960.

[18]*Az-Zamān*, 10 November 1960.

[19]*Al-Ḥayāt*, 29 December 1960.

[20]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha'b*, 28 September 1960.

[21]*Ibid*.,22 June 1960.

[22]*Al-Akhbār*, 16 November 1960.

[23]*Al 'Ahd-uj-Jadīd*, 22 February 1960.

[24]*Az-Zamān*, 14 May 1961.

[25]*Al-Mustaqbal*, 6 July 1961.

[26]1967 internal Communist circular entitled "An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965" (in Arabic), p. 16.

[27]Its provincial centers had been liquidated in the wake of the Kirkūk incidents.

[28]*Al-Istiqlāl*, 10 May 1960.

[29]World Federation of Democratic Youth, *Iraqi Youth, Their Movement and Tasks*, p. 18.

[30]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* and *Ar-Ra’u-l-‘Ām*, 31 July 1960.

[31]World Federation of Democratic Youth, *Iraqi Youth*, pp. 22-23.

[32]*Al-Mustaqbal*, 8 May 1961.

[33]For ‘Azīz Sharīf, see Table 42-6.

[34]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 5 May 1960.

[35]*Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, 25 February 1960.

[36]See, e.g., *ibid*.,12 December 1961.

[37]This is the name by which the Iraqi League for the Defence of Women’s Rights was known after March 7, 1960; *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 8 March 1960.

[38]Conversation February 1964 with Dr. Rose Khaddūrī, a leader of the League.

[39]*Al-Istiqlāl*, 17 September 1960.

[40]*Ittiḥād-ul-‘Ummāl, 9* March 1960.

[41]By March 20, according to *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b* of March 21, 1960, no fewer than 114 port and other workmen had been interned in Baṣrah alone.

[42]For the text of the circular, see *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 7 June 1960.

[43]*Ittiḥād-ul-‘Ummāl*, 27 May 1960; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b, 7* July I960.

[44]Article by ach-Chādirchī in *Al-Muwāṭin*, 23 September 1962.

[45]*Ittiḥād-ul-‘Ummāl*, 15 April 1960.

[46]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 18 September 1960.

[47]*Ath-Thawrah*, 21 May 1961.

[48]1967 internal Communist circular, “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 15; and *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, September 18, 1959.

[49]See Articles 6 and 7 of Law No. 139 of (September 6) 1959 in *At-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Iraqiyyah*, No. 225 of 9 September 1959.

[50]*Ṣawt-ul-Furāt*, 5 March 1960; *Iraqi Review*, 9 March 1960; *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 15 April 1960 and 9 September 1960; and *World Marxist*

Review, November 1961, p. 96.

[51]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b, 2* June and 20 August 1960; and *Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, 24 February I960.

[52]Zakī Khairī (member of Politbureau), *Taqrīr ‘An Masā’il fī-l-Iṣlāḥ az-Zirā‘ī* (“Report on Questions of Agrarian Reform”) (1960), pp. 51-52.

[53]The Communists at the time accused the authorities of “crudely falsifying” the elections to the peasant unions: *Ittihad-ush-Sha‘b, 2* and 25 March and 30 June 1960.

[54]*At-Taqaddum*, 10 October 1960.

[55]Zakī Khairī, *Taqrīr*, pp. 52-53.

[56]*Ibid*., pp. 50 and 53-57. See also ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj, member of the Central Committee, remarks in *World Marxist Review*, March 1961, pp. 64-65. The “big” landowners were identified as those owning “more than 2,000” (and the “middle” landowners as those owning between 400 and 2,000) *dūnums* of rain-fed land, or the equivalent of land irrigated by free flow or by artificial means.

[57]See p. 924.

[58]*Al-Mustaqbal*, 20 October 1962.

[59]See, e.g., *Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 8 and 23 March, 21, 22 and 24 April, 1 and 11 May, 12 and 22 June, 18 July, 8, 24 and 25 August, and 20 September 1960; and *Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b*, Year 19, No. 1 of late March 1962.

[60]*Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, 18 May 1960.

[61]Conversation, February 16, 1964.

[62]*Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b* (the party’s underground paper) of early November 1961.

[63]*World Marxist Review*, November 1961, p. 95.

[64]Conversation, ‘Abd-ul-Ghanī Mallāḥ, 15 August 1966.

[65]*Al-Fayḥā’*, 23 April 1960.

[66]*Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 6 April 1960.

[67]*Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 10 June 1960.

[68]See, e.g., *Al-Ahālī*, 3 March 1960.

[69]See, e.g., *Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, 3 February; and *Ath-Thabāt*, 6 February 1960.

[70]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 3 March 1960.

[71]*Ath-Thabāt*, 8 November 1960.

[72]*Al-Ahālī*, 10 March 1960.

[73]Chādirehī and Hadīd, conversations with this writer, 11 and 12 February 1962; *Al-Ahālī*, 28 April, 12 and 20 May, and 3 June 1960; *Al-Bayān*, 30 April, 6 and 13 May 1960; The Progressive Democrats in Banks and Money-changing Offices, *Limāzha Inbathaqa al-Ḥizbu-l-Watanī at-Taqaddumī* (“Why the National Progressive Party Came into Being”) (1960), pp. 12, 17-26, and 34-45.

[74]*al-‘Ahd-uj-Jadīd*, 24 February and 17 April 1961; and *Al-Ahālī*, 13 March, 1 and 13 October 1961.

[75]*al-‘Ahd-uj-Jadīd*, 24 February 1961.

[76]*Al-Muwātīn*, 23 September 1962.

[77]E.g., *Al-Ahālī*, 13 March 1961; and 1967 internal Communist circular, “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 17.

[78]Hānī al-Fkaikī and Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rādī, members in 1963 of the Ba‘th Iraqi Command: conversations, 6 September 1964.

[79]1967 internal Communist circular, “Attempt to Appraise,” p. 17.

[80]*Ittiḥād-ush-Sha‘b*, 30 June 1960.

[81]1967 internal Communist circular, “Attempt to Appraise,” p. 17.

[82]The following account is based upon a conversation on 6 September 1964 with Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rādī, a member of the Ba‘th Party Command, who had charge of the investigation of the Communists in 1963, and who read the record of the proceedings of the committee, which unfortunately appears to have since been lost.

[83]For these members of the Politbureau, see Table 42-6.

[84]*Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b*, Year 18, No. 1 of early November 1961.

[85]Iraqi Communist Party, Report of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Adopted at Its Ordinary Meeting of November 1961, para. 5 and 6.

[86]*Ṣawt-ul-Aḥrār*, 12 December 1961; and *Arba‘ta‘shar Tammūz* (“July 14”), 18 December 1961.

[87]Law No. 80 of (11 December) 1961.

[88]Communist party statement of 8 July 1962, *Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b*, Year 19, No. 4 of early July 1962.

52 The Ba‘thists Make Preparation, the Communists Give Warning

[1]Conversations with Ṭāleb Shabīb, September 1967; Fū’ād ar-Rikābī, February 1967; Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī and Hānī al-Fkaikī, September 1964; and Faiṣal Ḥabīb al-Khaizarān, February 1963. For these persons, consult Table A-49.

[2]The source wished to remain unnamed.

[3]Conversation, February 1964.

[4]See *Ṣawt-ul-‘ Urūbah* (Beirut), 25 June 1961.

[5]Consult Table 41-4.

[6]A type of peasant-entrepreneur.

[7]The Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, internal document: The Second Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq at the Extraordinary Syrian Regional Congress, 2 February 1964 (in Arabic), p. 5.

[8]For al-Hāshimī, and at-Takritī, see Table 55-1.

[9]Al-Wandāwī, who would on 16 February 1963 be appointed to the command of the National Guard, was born in Nāṣiriyyah around 1935. His mother was Turkoman, but his father, a cinema watchman, was a Sunnī Arab.

[10]Conversations with Ṭāleb Shabīb, member of the Regional Command and of the Military Bureau, September 1967; and with Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī, member of the Regional Command, September 1964.

[11]Ḥabbāniyyah is about 45 miles to the west of Baghdād.

[12]Conversation with Ṭāleb Shabīb, September 1967.

[13]*Al-Ahrām*, 18 January 1963.

[14]For these details I am indebted to a contemporary member of the Baghdād Local Committee of the Communist party who does not wish to be named. For the participation of the Kurds in the strike, see also *Al-*

Ishtirākī (“The Socialist”—an underground organ of the Ba‘th party), January 1963.

15Conversation in September 1964 with Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī, member in 1963 of the Ba‘th Regional Command.

16The camp at Abū Ghraib formed part of the camps in Greater Baghdād.

17The text of the statement was republished in *Al-Akhbār* (organ of the Lebanese Communist party), 3 March 1963. Excerpts from the statement were also broadcast by “Peyk-e Iran” on 8 March 1963. See B.B.C. EE/1199/A4/2-3 of 14 March 1963.

181967 internal Communist circular entitled “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 23.

19Conversations with Ṭāleb Shabīb, September 1967; and with Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī and Hānī al-Fkaikī, September 1964.

53 “The Bitterest of Years”

1Conversation with a member of the Workers’ Bureau attached to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist party and a relative of al-Awqātī.

2For most of the details in this and the following paragraphs I am indebted, unless otherwise indicated, to Ṭāleb Shabīb, Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī, and Hānī al-Fkaikī.

31967 internal Communist circular, “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic), p. 22.

4*Al-Ahrām* (Cairo), 9 February 1963.

5This is clear from the use of the Arabic words *al-waḥdah al-waṭaniyyah* rather than *al-waḥdah Al-Qāwmiyyah*.

6For the text of the statement, see *Aj-Jamāhīr* (organ of the Ba‘th of Iraq), 12 February 1963.

7For a translation of the text of the announcement, see B.B.C. ME/1171/A/2 of 9 February 1963.

[8]Brigadiers Waṣfī Ṭāher, Ṭaha ash-Shaikh Aḥmad, ‘Abd-ul-Karīm aj-Jiddah, and Fāḍil ‘Abbās al-Mahdāwī.

[9]Conversation, Kāmel ach-Chādirchī, February 1964.

[10]Among others, Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-‘Aballī(see Table 31-1), Bāsim Mushtāq (see Table 53-1), and ‘Iṣām al-Qādī, an oil refinery employee from an Arab Sunnī upper middle-class family.

[11]See pp. 933-934.

[12]Undated internal Communist circular which was found in one of the party’s houses; and conversation with a member of the Baghdād Local Committee who was a witness to the day’s events, and was entrusted by ar-Raḍī with the distribution of the proclamation on the ar-Raṣāfah side of Baghdād. I am indebted for the text of the proclamation to Ḥusain Jamīl of the National Democratic party, from whom I obtained it on 3 March 1963.

[13]Statement by Ismā‘īl made on the radio and television on 10 March 1963: Iraq News Agency, Supplement to Bulletin 63, 10 March 1963.

[14]For Shkhaytem, see Table 53-1.

[15]For Ṣabḥah, Hindū, and ar-Rūmī, see Table 53-1.

[16]Conversations with a member of the Baghdād Local Committee and a member of the Workers’ Bureau attached to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist party, who had roles in organizing the resistance in ‘Aqd al-Akrād; statement of ‘Abd-ul-Mawjūd ‘Abd-ul-Laṭīf, the director of an-Najdah Post, in *Aj-Jamāhīr*, 26 July 1963; and statement of Ḥamdī Ayyūb al-‘Ānī over Baghdād Radio on 11 March 1963.

[17]And not at 15:00 hours, as subsequently announced by Ba‘thī State Minister Ḥāzem Jawād.

[18]I am indebted for the text of the appeal to Ḥusain Jamīl of the National Democratic party.

[19]1967 internal Communist circular, “Attempt to Appraise,” pp. 21-23.

[20]1967 internal Communist circular, “Attempt to Appraise,” p. 24.

[21]Al-Ḥaras *Al-Qāwmī* (organ of the Nationalist Guard), No. 3 of September 1963.

[22]Statement of ‘Abd-ul-Mawjūd ‘Abd-ul-Laṭīf, the director of an-Najdah Post, in *Aj-Jamāhīr*, 26 July 1963.

[23]See p. 971.

[24]B.B.C. ME/1172/A/1 of 11 February 1963.

[25]Conversations with nationalists who do not wish to be named.

[26]“President ‘Āref Relates the Story of the Decisive Hours,” *The Revolution of July 14 Returns to Its Authors* (in Arabic), (Beirut, 1963), pp. 49-50.

[27]Literally “the Generous,” which is one of the Moslem attributes of God. The phrase was substituted for Qāsim’s first name, which means “the slave of the Generous.”

[28]*Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘lrāqiyyah*, No. 771 of 18 February 1963.

[29]Conversations with a member of the Baghdād Local Committee and a member of the Worker’s Bureau attached to the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist party, who assisted Muḥammad Ṣāliḥ al-‘Aballī organizing the resistance in ‘Aqd al-Akrād; and Iraqi News Agency Bulletin No. 60 of March 1963.

[30]See pp. 951.

[31]Ṣāleḥ Duglah, member of the Central Committee of the Communist party, at a press conference in Prague, *Al-Akhbār* (Beirut), 27 October 1963.

[32]The Ba‘th Party (’Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī’s faction), *The Crisis of the Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party as Seen from Its Experience in Iraq* (in Arabic), (Beirut?, 1964), p. 70.

[33]*Al-Ahrām* (Cairo), 27 September 1963.

[34]*The International Herald Tribune* (Paris), 19-20 February 1977.

[35]For an-Nāṣirī, see Tables 22-1 and 51-2.

[36]For ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj, see Tables 23-1 and 51-2.

[37]For Abū-l-‘Īss, see Table 42-6.

[38]B.B.C. ME/1196/A/6 of 11 March 1963. The other factual details in this paragraph were obtained from the First Branch of Iraq’s Directorate of Security and from persons, in a position to know, who do not wish to be named.

[39]For ample documentation of the violence committed by the Nationalist Guard in this period, see Government of Iraq, *Al-Munḥarifūn* ("The Deviationists") (Baghdād, 1964).

[40]For al-Ḥaidarī and al-ʻAballī, see Tables 31-1, 37-1, and 51-2.

[41]This body also embraced, among others, the Central Committee members ʻAzīz al-Ḥājj and Farḥān at-Tuʻmah, the Communist Retired Brigadier Hashim ʻAbd-uj-Jabbār, and former ministers Dr. Faiṣal as-Sāmīr and Dr. Nazīhah ad-Dulaimī.

[42]1967 internal Communist circular, "Attempt to Appraise," p. 25.

[43]Conversation, Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī, member of the 1963 Iraqi Baʻth Command, September 1964; communique of the Revolutionary Command Council of 3 July 1963 in *Aj-Jamāhīr*, 4 July 1963; and statement of the military prosecutor general at the trial of the participants in the rising in *Aj-Jamāhīr*, 18 July 1963.

[44]The figure was obtained by this writer from the First Branch of the Directorate of Security in 1967.

[45]This is probably a reference to ar-Rashīd Camp rising of 3 July 1963.

[46]The Arab Baʻth Socialist Party, internal document (mimeographed), "Re-marks of Comrade Muḥammad ʻUmrān at the Extraordinary Syrian Regional Congress," 2 February 1964, p. 3.

[47]For ʻAbd-ur-Raḥīm Sharīf, see Tables 37-1 and 51-2.

[48]For Ḥamzah Salmān aj-Jubūrī, see Tables 42-6 and 51-2.

[49]For Nāfiʻ Yūnis, see Tables 22-1 and 51-2.

[50]For George Tallū, see Tables 31-1 and 51-2.

[51]Source: First Branch of the Directorate of Security.

[52]*Al-Manār*, 3 June 1964; and Government of Iraq, *Al-Munḥarifūn*, pp. 63-71.

[53]For documentation, Government of Iraq, *Al-Munḥarifūn*, pp. 30-32, 39-41, 49-51, and *passim*.

[54]Baʻth Party, *The Crisis of the Arab Socialist Baʻth Party as Seen from Its Experience in Iraq* (in Arabic), p. 74.

[55]Ḥamdī ʻAbd-ul-Majīd, member of the Pan-Arab and Iraqi Baʻth Commands. See Table 52-1.

[56]For a discussion of the regime and its composition, turn to Chapter 55.

[57]Arab Ba‘th Socialist Party, internal document (mimeographed) “The Second Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq at the Extraordinary Syrian Regional Congress,” 2 February 1964, p. 2.

[58]1967 internal Communist circular, “Attempt to Appraise,” pp. 20-22.

[59]Compare with Lenin’s 1917 remark: “The success of the Russian and World Revolution depends upon a two or three days’ struggle.” But Lenin was, of course, consciously exaggerating: the period favorable for a revolutionary overturn in the Russia of the autumn of 1917 was probably weeks or one or two months.

[60]1967 internal Communist circular, “Attempt to Appraise,” pp. 20-25.

[61]See pp. 690 ff.

54 The Composition and Organization of the Communist Party (1955-1963

[1]See Table 42-6.

[2]See Table 42-6.

[3]See Table 27-5.

[4]See p. 712.

[5]See Tables 29-1, 31-1, 37-1, 42-6.

[6]See p. 752.

[7]1967 internal Communist circular, “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 196 5” (in Arabic), p. 10.

[8]See pp. 703 ff.

[9]See p. 896.

[10]See Table A-39.

[11]Conversation with a member of the 1963 Baghdād Local Committee.

[12]For the Military Committee, see Table A-43.

[13]See pp. 896-899. 922 ff., and 942 ff.

14The Kurdish Branch included the party organizations in the provinces of Arbīl, Sulaimāniyyah, and Kirkūk. The Southern Zone embraced the organizations of Baṣrah, ‘Amārah, and Nāṣiriyyah. To the *mas‘ūl* of the Central Zone reported the organizations of Kūt, Diyālah, and Ramādī Under the *mas‘ūl* of the Mid-Euphrates came the organizations of Karbalā’, Ḥillah, and Dīwāniyyah.

55 The First Ba‘thī Regime, or toward One-Party Rule

1The council had the right, among other things, to make laws, appoint and dismiss cabinets, assume the supreme command of the armed forces and, as from 4 April 1963, of the police and the Nationalist Guard, and to supervise generally the affairs of the Republic, including those relating to military intelligence and public security. Proclamation No. 15 of 8 February 1963 and the National Council of the Revolutionary Command Law No. 25 of 4 April 1963 refer: *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 771 of 18 February and No. 797 of 25 April 1963.

2Nine of the twelve seats were held by full members and three by supporters of the party. Seven of the full members were simultaneously members of the National Council of the Revolutionary Command, and are identified in Table 55-1. The two others were Dr. ‘Izzat Muṣṭafa and Dr. Sa‘dūn Ḥammādī, who were entrusted with the portfolios of Health and Agrarian Reform, respectively. For these men, see Table A-49. To the three supporters—Dr. ‘Abd-ul-Karīm al-‘Alī, a Sunnī Arab engineer from Mosul; Dr. Aḥmad ‘Abd-us-Sattār aj-Jawārī, a Baghdādī Sunnī Arab and the head of the Teachers’ Union; and Dr. Musāri’ ar-Rāwī, a Sunnī Arab college professor from Rāwah—went the portfolios of Planning, Education, and Guidance.

3For Nājī Tāleb, who became the minister of industry, see Table 41-2. For Brigadier Fū’ād ‘Āref, who was made minister of state, see Table 42-4. Brigadier Khaṭṭāb, who received the portfolio of Municipalities, was a Sunnī Arab from Mosul.

4Bābā ‘AIī. son of Shaikh Maḥmūd, who was given the portfolio of agriculture. For this man, see Table 42-2.

[5]‘Abd-us-Sattar ‘AIī al-Ḥusain and Shukrī Ṣāleḥ Zakī, both Baghdād Arab Sunnī lawyers, who were allotted the portfolios of housing and trade, respectively.

[6]Finance to Sāliḥ Kubbah, a Baghdād Arab Shī‘ī upper government official; oil to Dr. ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz al-Wattārī, an Arab Sunnī professor of geology from Mosul; and justice to Mahdī ad-Dawla‘ī, an Arab Shī‘ī judge from Baghdād.

[7]Conversations with Hānī al-Fkaikī and Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī, members in 1963 of the Iraqi Ba‘th Command, 6 September 1964.

[8]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, internal document, “The First Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq at the Extraordinary Syrian Regional Congress,” 2 February 1964 (mimeographed, in Arabic), p. 8.

[9]For ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, see Table 41-2.

[10]‘Abd-ul-Karīm Farḥān, see Table 41-2.

[11]For Muḥammad Majīd, see Table 41-4,

[12]For Ṣubḥī ‘Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, see Table 41-4.

[13]For Ḥasan Muṭāfa an-Naqīb, see Table 41-4. For Muḥammad al-Mahdāwī, see Table A-49.

[14]For Naṣrat, see Table 55-1.

[15]Conversations with Ba‘thists who do not wish to be named.

[16]For al-Wandāwī, see Table A-49.

[17]See n. 1 above.

[18]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, internal document, “An Attempt at an Explanation of the Existing Crisis and at an Appraisal of the Party’s Experience in Iraq” (February 1964) (mimeographed, in Arabic), p. 4.

[19]See Table 55-2.

[20]“The First Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq,” p. 4.

[21]*Ibid*., pp. 2-3 and 4.

[22]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, “The Second Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq at the Extraordinary Syrian Regional Congress,” 2 February 1964 (mimeographed, in Arabic), p. 5.

[23]“The First Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq,” p. 3.

[24]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, “The Remarks of Comrade ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī at the Extraordinary Syrian Regional Congress,” February 1964 (in

Arabic), p. 3.

[25]Ba‘th party (as-Sa‘dī’s faction), *The Crisis of the Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party as Seen from Its Experience in Iraq* (in Arabic), p. 41.

[26]Dr. Munīf ar-Razzāz (secretary general of the Ba‘th party, 1965-1966), *At-Tajribah al-Murrah* (“The Bitter Experience”) (Beirut, 1967), p. 78 n.

[27]In a nutshell and insofar as internal policy was concerned, the program called for a regime in which the masses would take part in “running, guiding, and supervising” the government and which would rest not only on the Ba‘th party, but on a front embracing all “progressive and nationalist” organizations, For the text of the transitional program as broadcast by al-Bakr, see *Al-Ba‘th*, No. 19 of 18 March 1963.

[28]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, “The Remarks of Comrade ‘AIī Saleḥ as-Sa‘dī,” p. 3.

[29]This was a diminutive Nāṣirite party led by ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq Shabīb, the president of the Bar Association.

[30]*Al-Ḥurriyyah* (Beirut), 29 April 1963.

[31]*Aj-Jamāhīr* (Baghdād), 26 May 1963.

[32]*Al-Anwār* (Beirut), 26 May 1963; American University of Beirut, *Al-Wathā’iq-ul-‘Arabiyyah* (“Arab Documents”) (1963), p. 533.

[33]The ‘Alawīs are a small Moslem sect, forming some 10 percent of the population of Syria.

[34]For these colonels, see Table A-50.

[35]See his *At-Tajribah al-Murrah*, especially pp. 86-88 and 95-101.

[36]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, internal document, “The Remarks of Comrade Muḥammad ‘Umrān at the Extraordinary Syrian Regional Congress,” February 1964 (mimeographed, in Arabic), pp. 2-3.

[37]These percentages are computed from data in Table 52-1.

[38]For “active members,” see p. 1010.

[39]Conversations with Hānī al-Fkaikī and Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī, members in 1963 of the Ba‘th Regional Command, 6 September 1964. The distribution of the 830 “active members” by party branches was roughly as follows: Greater Baghdād (largely al-A‘ḍhamiyyah and al-Karkh), 300; the North (largely Mosul), 80; the Central Branch (ar-

Ramādī, Ba‘qūbah, and Kūt), 200; the Mid-Euphrates (Najaf, Dīwāniyyah, and Ḥillah), 150; the South (Baṣrah, Nāṣiriyyah, and ‘Amārah), 100.

[40]Individuals are counted here as many times as the number of terms for which they were appointed or elected to the command.

[41]The Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, “The Remarks of Comrade ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī,” p. 2.

[42]Law No. 11 of 1963 Amending Personal Status Law No. 188 of 1959, *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 785 of 21 March 1963; and the Ba‘th party (as-Sa‘dī’s faction), *The Crisis of the Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party*, pp. 88-89.

[43]Ba‘th party, “The Remarks of Comrade ‘Alī Ṣāleḥ as-Sa‘dī, p. 4.

[44]Conversation, Ṭāleb Shabīb, 21 September 1967.

[45]Telegram No. 1610 of 4 June 1963 from the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces to the Command of the Nationalist Guard; and letter No. 421 of 4 June 1963 from the Command of the Guard to the Ministry of Defence. Texts in Government of Iraq, *Al-Munḥarifūn*, pp. 72-73.

[46]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, “The Second Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq,” pp. 3-4.

[47]For these Ba‘thists, see Table A-49.

[48]Conversation, Ṭāleb Shabīb, 21 September 1967.

[49]Ba‘th party (as-Sa‘dī’s faction), *The Crisis of the Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party*, p. 65.

[50]For Shintāf, see Table A-49.

[51]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, “The First Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq,” p. 3.

[52]See his statement to a Lebanese correspondent in *Aj-Jarīdah* (Beirut) of 20 February 1963.

[53]For ash-Shūfī; see Table A-50.

[54]For this committee, see p. 1015.

[55]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, “The First Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq,” p. 8.

[56]For the composition of the National Command, see Table A-50.

[57]For the text of the resolutions of the congress, see *Al-Ba‘th* (Damascus), 28 October 1963.

[58]Ba‘th party (as-Sa‘dī’s faction), *The Crisis of the Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party*, p. 132.

[59]As far as the Iraqi leadership was concerned, ‘Aflaq could only have meant Hānī al-Fkaikī who, however, had been merely a Peace Partisan and in 1951-1954, that is, almost a decade before his rise to the Ba‘th command. On the other hand, Ṭāleb Shabīb was a full member of the Communist party in 1948-1951, but at the 1963 Ba‘thī National Congress he stood on the side of ‘Aflaq. Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rādī, who was labelled a Communist by his opponents, had actually been a supporter of the Independence party before his adherence to the Ba‘th.

[60]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, “The First Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq,” pp. 8-10.

[61]Ba‘th party (as-Sa‘dī’s faction), *The Crisis of the Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party*, pp. 58-59.

[62]Article 38 of the rules as amended.

[63]In circulating in 1964 this version of al-Mahdāwī s remarks, as-Sa‘dī may not have been unmoved by the desire to influence party events in Syria. This does not mean that it is necessarily in variance with the facts.

[64]The new Regional Command consisted of the following: Muḥammad al-Mahdāwī, Ḥāzem Jawād, Ṭāleb Shabīb, ‘Abd-us-Sattār ‘Abd-ul-LaṭīT, Ṭāher Yaḥya, Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Ṣāleḥ Mahdī‘Ammāsh, Ṭāreq ‘Azīz, ‘Adnān Al-Qāṣṣāb, ‘Abd-us-Sattār ad-Dūrī, ‘Alī‘Araim, Karīm Shintāf; Fū’ād Shāker Muṣṭafa, Ḥasan al-Ḥājj Waddāi, Fā’iq al-Bazzāz, and Mundhir al-Wandāwī. For these men, see Table A-49.

[65]Ba‘th party (as-Sa‘dī’s faction), *The Crisis of the Arab Socialist Ba‘th Party*, pp. 114-116; and conversations with Hānī al-Fkaikī and Muḥsin ash-Shaikh Rāḍī, 6 September 1964, and with Ṭāleb Shabīb, 21 September 1967.

[66]Azīz al-Mashhadānī, ‘Adnān ‘Abbūd, Muḥammad Zakī Yūnis, Ḍiyā’ Fāleḥ al-Falakī, and Ḥasan al-‘Āmirī, among others.

[67]B.B.C. ME/1404/A/4 of 14 November 1963.

[68]General Ṣālaḥ Jadīd, Jubrān Majdalānī, Khālid al-‘Alī, and later Ḥamūd ash-Shūfī. For these men, see Table A-50.

[69]Arab Ba‘th Socialist party, “The Second Utterance of Comrade Michel ‘Aflaq,” 2 February 1964, p. 5.

[70]*Wa‘y-ul-‘Umāl*, No. 32 of 16 November 1963.

56 The Younger ‘Āref, the Nāṣirites, and the Communists

[1]The appointments of Ṣlaibī and ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref to their respective posts were effective 16 December 1963. Decree No. 1178 refers. See *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 896 of 28 December 1963.

[2]The Revolutionary Council’s Proclamation No. 1 of 18 November 1963, *Al-Waqāi(-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 892 of 15 December 1963.

[3]Arab Bureau, Baghdād, *Arab Tribes of the Baghdād Wilāyat*, July 1918, p. 137.

[4]Shaikh Muḥammad al-Mushawwaḥ. See ‘Abbās al-‘Azzāwī”, *‘Ashā’īr-ul-Iraq* (The Tribes of Iraq), III (Baghdād, 1955), pp. 139-143.

[5]Conversation with ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, Isṭanbūl, 18 February 1970.

[6]As of 16 December 1963.

[7]For this last point, see Article II of the National Council of the Revolutionary Command Law No. 61 of (22 April) 1964, *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 948 of 9 May 1964.

[8]I learned this particular detail from Munaḥ aṣ-Ṣulḥ, a prominent Lebanese writer, who was at the time a student at the university. All the other facts in this section I got on 23 February 1970 from Hānī al-Hindī, a leader and founder of the movement.

[9]Ḥabash, Shibl, Darwazah, Mahāynī, Bayḍūn, and Fāḍel.

[10]Whence the Iraqi abbreviation Ḥarakiyyīn.

[11]Conversation with Hānī al-Hindī, 23 February 1970.

[12]*Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 892 of 15 December 1963 and No. 896 of 28 December 1963; *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 5 January 1964; and *An-Nahār* (Beirut), 3 March 1964.

[13]For the text of the agreement, see American University of Beirut, *Al-Wathā‘iq-ul-‘Arabiyyah*, 1964, pp. 270-271; and for an English

translation, *Arab Political Documents*, 1964, pp. 217-219.

[14]Conversation, February 1967, with Fū'ād ar-Rikābī, assistant secretary general, in 1964-1965 of the Arab Socialist Union-Iraqi Region.

[15]*Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 15 and 19 July 1964.

[16]For the text and an English translation of the agreement, see *Al-Wathā'iq-ul-'Arabiyyah*, 1964, p. 519 and *Arab Political Documents*, 1964, pp. 430-431.

[17]*Al-Muḥarrer* (a Nāṣirite paper published in Beirut), 22 September 1964.

[18]*New York Times*, 15 April 1966.

[19]The Nāṣirite ministers were now Ṣubḥī 'Abd-ul-Ḥamīd, 'Abd-ul-Karīm Farḥān, 'Azīz al-Hāfiḍh, Adīb aj-Jāder, 'Abd-us-Sattār 'Alī al-Ḥusain, and Fū'ād ar-Rikābī, to whom went, respectively, the portfolios of interior, guidance economics, industry, justice, and municipal and rural affairs; conversation with Fū'ād ar-Rikābī, February 1967.

[20]Minister of Finance (Shukrī Ṣāleḥ Zakī, a conservative nationalist), (Secret) *Report on the Economic Policy in Iraq* (mimeographed, in Arabic) (December 1965), p. 12.

[21]Muḥammad Jawād al-'Ubūsī, 'Abd-ul-Azīz al-Wattārī, Shukrī Ṣāleḥ Zakī, 'Abd-us-Ṣāḥib 'Alwān, 'Abd-ul-Fattāh al-Alūsī, and Muṣleḥ an-Naqshbandī, ministers of finance, oil, education, agrarian reform, public works, and waqf, respectively.

[22]See p. 959.

[23]Conversation with Fū'ād ar-Rikābī, February 1967; and letter of resignation of Adīb aj-Jādir, Nāṣirite minister of industry, dated 4 July 1965. For a translation of this letter, see B.B.C. ME/1931/A/5 of August 1965.

[24]Āref 'Abd-ur-Razzāq had been born to a small landowner in 1924 in Kubaisah, a village in the province of ar-Ramādī. He graduated from the military academy in 1943 and from an English aviation school in 1945, and attended the staff college between 1951 and 1952. From 14 July to 8 December 1958 he served as commander of the air base at Ḥabbāniyyah. On 8 March 1959 he was arrested in connection with the Shawwāf revolt, but was returned to the service on 5 August of the same year, and to the

command of the Ḥabbāniyyah base on 21 August 1962. *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 7 September 1965.

[25]Ad-Darrājī and ‘Āref entered Baghdād together on 14 July 1958, ad-Darrājī leading a battalion of the Twentieth Brigade under ‘Āref. Ad-Darrājī, who was born in Ramādī in 1913, and was from the Military Academy’s graduating class of 1937, had been pensioned off in April of 1959.

[26]The Council was composed of ‘Āref, the chief of staff, and his deputies; the commanders of the air force and of the five army divisions; the military governor general; and the premier and ministers, who were also army officers.

[27]Article I (2b) of the law, *Al-Waqāi‘-al-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 948 of 9 May 1964.

[28]*Aj- Jumhūriyyah*, 12 September 1965. For the composition of the National Defence Council, see Chapter 57, n. 1.

[29]The first four above-mentioned points found expression in ‘Āref’s letter of appointment to ‘Abd-ur-Razzāq of 6 September, and were “confirmed” without being specified in his letter of appointment to al-Bazzāz of 21 September. See *Aj-Jumhūriyyah* of 7 and 22 September 1965. The last point came in al-Bazzāz’s public statement of 23 September, as quoted in *An-Nahār* (Beirut), 24 September 1965.

[30]Remark of “Comrade Ṣādeq” (Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd) at a secret meeting of the Iraqi Communist party’s Committee for the Organization Abroad held in Prague on 18 November 1965. A copy of the record of the meeting was made available to this writer by the first Branch of Iraq’s Directorate of Security.

[31]For these men, see Tables 31-1, 29-1, 22-1, and 42-6.

[32]For these Communists, see Tables 56-1, 42-6, 31-1, 51-2, 23-1, and 14-2. The first three lived in Moscow, the others in Prague.

[33]Article written on 29 November 1963 by a member of the Central Committee living abroad, *Al-Akhbār* (Beirut), 29 December 1963; statement of 21 January 1964 by the Higher Committee for the Defence of the Iraqi People, *An-Nidā’* (Beirut), 2 February 1964; statement by the First Conference of the Movement for the Defence of the Iraqi People issued in West Berlin in April 1964, *Al-Akhbār*, 26 April 1964 and

B.B.C. ME/1534/A/7-8 of 22 April 1964 and ME/1536/A/2 of 24 April 1964. See also report of the Central Committee of the Communist party of early May 1964 broadcast over the "Voice of the Iraqi People" on 14-17 July 1964, B.B.C. ME/1609/A/1-9 of 20 July, and ME/1611/A/1-2 of 22 July 1964.

[34]*An-Nidā'* (organ of the Lebanese Communist party), 16 February 1964.

[35]*An-Nidā'*, 15 October 1964.

[36]February 1967 internal party circular, "An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965," pp. 51-52.

[37]Quoted *ibid*., p. 51.

[38]From an unpublished report of the August Plenum, quoted *ibid*., p. 50.

[39]From the manifesto of the August Plenum as published in *An-Nidā'*, 15 October 1964.

[40]The conference appealed for an alliance not merely between the Communists and the "supporters of Cairo's policy" in the "Arab East" but between "all revolutionaries" in the "Arab World." For the communiqué of the conference, see *Pravda*, 11 December 1964; and *Al-Akhbār*, 20 December 1964.

[41]From the report of the August Plenum as published by *Al-Akhbār* (weekly organ of the Lebanese Communist party), 6 December 1964.

[42]*Ibid*.

[43]Quoted in February 1967 internal party circular, "Attempt to Appraise," p. 51.

[44]Manifesto of the August Plenum, *An-Nidā'*, 15 October 1964.

[45]Published report of the August Plenum, *Al-Akhbār*, 29 November 1964.

[46]From an internal document quoted in February 1967 internal party circular, "Attempt to Appraise," p. 36.

[47]*Ibid*., pp. 27 and 30; and "Munīr Aḥmad," "The Situation in Iraq and the Policy of the Communist Party," *Peace, Freedom, and Socialism*, VII,

No. 12, December 1964, 37-38. This article was an elaboration, in the name of the party, of the "August Line."

[48]See Table 56-1.

[49]The name "Mu'īn" was used in the party's internal correspondence and that of "Nāḍhim 'Alī' in the party's publications.

[50]February 1967 internal party circular, "Attempt to Appraise," p. 25.

[51]Conversation with a person who is in touch with the revolutionary underground and does not wish to be named.

[52]February 1967 internal party circular, "Attempt to Appraise," p. 52.

[53]Reference to this is made in an internal party bulletin issued in mid-August 1966, and entitled "For Activating the Mass Struggle" (in Arabic), p. 1.

[54]It is interesting that *Al-Akhbār*, the weekly organ of the Lebanese Communist party, which published in its issues of 13 and 20 June 1965 the report of the Central Committee of mid-April, omitted the call for the overthrow of 'Āref's regime, which was, however, carried by the "Voice of the Iraqi People" on 4-6 May 1965. See B.B.C. ME/1853/A/3 of 8 May 1965.

[55]Central Committee's statement of the beginning of June 1965, B.B.C. ME/1895/A/4 of 28 June 1965; and *Il-al-Amām* (Beirut), 6 September 1965.

[56]Party's statement of early October 1965, *Al-Akhbār*, 7 November, 1965.

[57]The gist of the reports of 'Āmer 'Abdallah and Bahā'-ud-Dīn Nūrī was reconstructed from comments made at two secret sessions of the Committee for the Organization Abroad held in Prague on 18 and 19 November 1965, and from the contents of a letter dated 18 December 1965 sent, on behalf of the Committee for the Organization Abroad, to the members of the Central Committee in Iraq by 'Azīz Muḥammad, 'Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd, and Bāqir Ibrahīm al-Mūsawī. For extensive quotations from the letter in question and from the recon of the Prague sessions, see pp. 1056-1060 and 1048 ff.

[58]The text of the resolution was cited in the letter of 18 December 1965 referred to in the preceding footnote.

[59]Statement to the police by Ḥamdullah Murṭada of late October 1965, made available to this writer by Iraq's Security Directorate.

[60]Arms?

[61]The members of the Committee for the Organization Abroad appear at times to use the term "Hāshim" to refer to the army and at other times to the party's Military Section.

[62]The suggestion appears to have been made in the earlier, preliminary meeting of the Committee for the Organization Abroad, and obviously reflects the influence of Mao Tse-tung's theory of the people's war.

[63]See pp. 901-902.

[64]Record of the meetings of the Committee for the Organization Abroad held on 18 and 19 November 1965 at Prague (in Arabic). A copy of the record was made available to this writer by the First Branch of Iraq's Directorate of Security.

[65]Letter of 18 December 1965 to the members of the Central Committee in Baghdād from party secretary ʻAzīz Muḥammad; ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd, and Bāqir Ibrahīm al-Mūsawī. The letter, which was probably sent from Moscow, was made available to this writer by Iraq's Directorate of Security.

[66]The proposals are mentioned in the letter of the 18 December 1965 referred to in the preceding footnote.

[67]I.e., the twenty-five members of the Enlarged Meeting.

[68]Record of the meeting of the Committee for the Organization Abroad held on 19 November 1965 at Prague (in Arabic).

[69]A party conference or a plenary session of the Central Committee.

[70]Letter of 18 December 1965 to the members of the Central Committee in Baghdād from ʻAzīz Muḥammad, ʻAbd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd, and Bāqir Ibrahīm al-Mūsawī.

57 Under the Elder ʻĀref, or the Rift in the Communist Ranks

[1]The council consisted of the chief of staff and his two assistants, and of the commanders of the air force, the navy, the Baghdād garrison, and the five army divisions as well as of the president, the premier, and the

ministers of defence, interior, foreign affairs, finance, economics, communications, planning, and guidance. See *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 12 September 1965. For the functions of the council, turn to p. 1034.

[2]For al-‘Uqailī, see also Table 42-1.

[3]Conversation, Ex-President ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, Isṭanbūl, 18 February 1970.

[4]A term applied to the rifle or other weapon which a soldier receives upon losing the one originally issued to him.

[5]For ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, see also Table 41-2.

[6]The Twelve-Point Proposal offered, among other things, the recognition of the Kurdish nationality in a prospective fundamental law, and of Kurdish as an official language in the Kurdish districts, the assignment of Kurdish civil servants to the Kurdish provinces, the reconstruction of the Kurdish zone, freedom for the Kurds to organize their own parties and put out their own newspapers, and their proportional representation in the government, the bureaucracy, and in a freely elected parliament: *An-Nahār* (Beirut), 30 June 1966.

[7]Conversation, Ex-President ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān ‘Āref, 18 February 1970.

[8]Minister of Finance (Shukrī Ṣāleḥ Zakī), (Secret) *Report on the Economic Policy in Iraq* (mimeographed, in Arabic) (1965), p. 14.

[9]For Nājī Ṭāleb, see also Table 41-2.

[10]Nājī Ṭāleb, premier and minister of petroleum; Shākir Maḥmūd Shukrī (an apolitical officer), minister of defence; Rajab ‘Abd-ul-Majīd (a friend of Ṭāleb and secretary in 1957-1958 of the Supreme Committee of the Free Officers–see Table 41-2), deputy premier and minister of interior; Aḥmad Kamāl Qāder (a retired Kurdish officer), minister of state for the reconstruction of the North; Dāūd Sarsam (a Christian ex-director general of military works), minister of municipalities and works; Durayd ad-Damlūjī (an ex-director general of the Iraqi News Agency), minister of guidance; and Ismā‘īl Muṣṭafa (an Iraqist and a Shī‘ī), minister of communications.

[11]For Yaḥya, see Tables 41-2 and 55-1.

[12]For ar-Rāwī, see Table 55-1.

[13]For ‘Abd-ul-Latīf, see Table 55-1.

[14]For Farḥān, see Table 41-2.

[15]*Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 3 July 1967.

[16]For Ṭāher Yaḥya, see Table 55-1.

[17]It embraced, in addition to fourteen civilians, five officers–apolitical Shākir Maḥmūd Shukrī at Defence, apolitical Khalīl Ibrahīm at Industry, Nāṣirite ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Farḥān at Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, Nāṣirite ‘Abd-ul-Hādī ar-Rāwī at Youth, and Ṭāher Yaḥya, who retained the Ministry of Interior in his own hands. It will also be noted that the cabinet included at Communications Majīd aj-Jumailī, a member of the Jumailah tribe and a cousin of Brigadier Sa‘īd Ṣlaibī.

[18]Law No. 97 of 6 August 1967, *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 1449 of 7 August 1967.

[19]Enterprise de Recherches et d’Activités Pétrolieres.

[20]For the text of the agreement with ERAP, see *Al-Waqāi’-ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 1532 of 4 February 1968.

[21]See B.B.C. ME/2655/A/5-6 of 29 December 1967.

[22]Azīz al-Ḥājj, member of Politbureau in 1967, statement in *Aṣ-Ṣayyād* (Beirut), 1-8 May 1969. For al-Ḥājj, see Table 23-1.

[23]*An-Nidā’* (organ of the Lebanese Communist party), 4 August 1966.

[24]Leaflet issued by the Iraqi Communist party in “early September 1966” and entitled “The Resolution of the Central Committee of the Iraqi Communist Party taken at its Ordinary Meeting of Mid-August 1966” (in Arabic).

[25]*Al-Akhbār*, 21 August and 4 September 1966.

[26]‘Azīz al-Ḥājj, *Aṣ-Ṣayyād*, 1-8 May 1969.

[27]See a statement by them published in the Marxist Beirut weekly, *Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 9 February 1970.

[28]Conversation in June 1969 with a 1963 member of the Baghdād Local Committee who does not wish to be identified.

[29]Letter of 18 December 1965 to the members of the Central Committee in Baghdād from Party Secretary ‘Azīz Muḥammad, ‘Abd-ul-Karīm Aḥmad ad-Dāūd, and Bāqir Ibrahīm al-Mūsawī.

[30]*Ibid*.

[31]February 1967 internal party circular, “An Attempt to Appraise the Policy of the Communist Party of Iraq in the Period July 1958-April 1965” (in Arabic).

[32]*Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb* (“Central Command” Group), June 1968 and late August 1968; *Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb* (“Central Committee” Group), December 1968; statements by the Iraqi Communist party (Central Command) of late July and late August 1968, published in *Al-Ḥurriyyah, 2* September and 9 December 1968; statement by “the Iraqi Revolutionary Assembly in Britain,” *Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 9 February 1970; ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj, statements in *Aṣ-Ṣayyād*, 10-17 April, 1-8 May, and 8-15 May 1969.

[33]*Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b*, No. 6 of January 1968, p. 1; and *Peace, Freedom, and Socialism*, April 1968, p. 41.

[34]*Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b*, No. 6 of January 1968, pp. 5-7.

[35]“Voice of the Iraqi People,” 26 February 1968.

58 The Second Ba‘thī Regime

[1]Conversation, ‘Āref, Isṭanbūl, 18 February 1970.

[2]Conversation, ‘Āref, Isṭanbūl, 18 February 1970.

[3]*Idem*.

[4]For the text of the proclamation, see *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 18 July 1968.

[5]Statement by Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, 30 July 1968, to *Aj-Jumhūriyyah;* and Revolutionary Command Council Communique No. 27, *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 31 July 1968.

[6]Dr. Aḥmad ‘Abd-us-Sattār aj-Jawārī at Education; Anwar ‘Abd-ul-Qāder al-Hadīthī(see Table 55-1) at Labor and Social Affairs; Dr. ‘Izzat Muṣṭafa (see Table A-49) at Health; Khālid Makkī al-Hāshimī (see Table 55-1) at industry; Diyāb al-‘Alqāwī at Youth; Dr. Ghā’ib Mawlūd Mukhliṣ at Municipal and Rural Affairs; Rashīd ar-Rifā‘ī, minister of state for presidential affairs; and, as already mentioned, ‘Ammāsh at Interior.

[7]The other seven were: an-Nāyef, premier; ad-Dāūd, Defence; Dr. Ṭaha al-Ḥājj Ilyās, Culture and Information; Muḥsen Al-Qazwīnī,

Agriculture; ‘Abd-ul-Majīd a j-Jumailī, Agrarian Reform; and Ministers without Portfolio Nājī al-Khalaf and Kāḍhim al-Mu‘alla.

[8]At Awqāf.

[9]The independent nationalist Jāsim al-‘Azzāwī (see Table 41-4) at Unity Affairs and the pan-Moslem Maḥmūd Sheet Khaṭṭāb at Communications.

[10]Ṣāleḥ Kubbah, Finance; Dr. Muḥammad Ya‘qūb as-Sa‘īdī, Planning; Dr. Mahdī Ḥantūsh, Oil.

[11]As minister for the reconstruction of the North. The other Kurds were: Muṣleh an-Naqshbandī, Justice; Iḥsān Shīrzād, Works and Housing; and ‘Abdallah an-Naqshbandī, Economics.

[12]See, e.g., *An-Nahār*, 20 and 21 July 1968.

[13]Revolutionary Command Council’s Communique No. 27, *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 31 July 1968.

[14]*Al-Ḥayāt*, 24 July 1968; and *Al-Ḥawādeth*, 9 August 1968.

[15]Socialist Arab Ba‘th Party, *Thawrat 17 Tammūz. At-Tajribatu wa-l-Āfāq* (The Revolution of July 17. The Experience and the Horizons), the political report of the Eighth Regional Congress of the Socialist Arab Ba‘th Party, Iraqi Region, Baghdād, January 1974, pp. 19-27; Ma‘an Bashshūr (a Syrian member in 1968 of the Ba‘th party), “The Story of ‘the Three Celebrated Days’ which prepared the Ground for the Second Coup” (in Arabic), *Al-Ḥawādeth* (Beirut), 9 August 1968; and *Aj-Jumhūriyyah* (Baghdad), 31 July 1968.

[16]Iraq, *Khīṭāb-ur-Ra‘īs-il-Qā’id Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr fī Thikra Thawratay 14 wa 17 Tammuz* (Speech of the Leader-President Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr on the Anniversary of the 14 and 17 July Revolutions) (Baghdad, 1975), p. 9.

[17]Iraq, *Khiṭāb-ur-Ra‘īs-il-Qā’id Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr fī Thikra Thawratay 14 wa 17 Tammuz* (Speech of the Leader-President Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr on the Anniversary of the 14 and 17 July Revolutions) (Baghdad, 1975), pp. 16 and 17.

[18]This figure comprises the members of such auxiliary Organizations of the Ba‘th party as the “People’s Army,” the Students’ Union, the Peasants’ Associations, the Federation of Labour Unions, and so on.

Even Ba‘thīsts admit that a large proportion of their “supporters” are “opportunists” and could not be relied upon in a moment of crisis.

[19]For this category of membership, see p. 1010.

[20]For the text of the interim 1968 constitution, see *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 22 September 1968.

[21]Article 1 of the 1968 constitution.

[22]Articles 12, 17a, 13.

[23]Al-Bakr is the cousin of Shaikh Nadā al-Ḥusain, the chief of al-Begāt.

[24]Ṣaddām lost his father when he was still a child.

[*]By reason of al-Bakr’s illness, Staff Colonel ‘Adnān al-Khairallah at-Ṭulfāḥ, the son-in-law of al-Bakr and the brother-in-law of Ṣaddām, has, as of October 1977, taken direct charge of the army.

[25]For the definition of the powers of the council, see Article 44 of the interim constitution of 21 September 1968, *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 22 September 1968. However, by a decree of 13 July 1973, many of the powers of the council were transferred into the hands of Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr as president of the Republic and chairman of the Council of Ministers, *An-Nahār*, 14 and 15 July 1973.

[26]The five are General Aḥmad Ḥasan al-Bakr, Ṣaddām Ḥusain, Lieutenant General Sa‘dūn Ghaidān, ‘Izzat ad-Dūfī, and aha aj-Jazzāwī (consult Table 58-1).

[27]‘Izzat ad-Dūrī, member of the Revolutionary Command Council.

[28]Iraqi Police File No. 281 entitled “Mawlūd Pāsha Mukhliṣ” and Great Britain, (Confidential) *Personalities. Iraq (Exclusive of Baghdād and Kaḍhimain)* (1921), p. 72.

[29]For Ḥardān ‘Abd-ul-Ghaffār, ‘Ammāsh, Shaikhlī, Shehāb, Ghaidān, and ‘Abd-ul-Khāliq as-Sāmarrā’ī, consult Table 58-2.

[30]For these categories of membership, see p. 1010.

[31]Conversation with a retired Nāṣirite army officer who wishes to remain nameless.

[32]Articles 2 and 29 of Agrarian Reform Law No. 117 of 1970, *Al-Waqāi‘ul-‘Irāqiyyah*, No. 1884 of 30 May 1970.

[33]One dīnār exchanged for U. S. $3.37 in 1975.

[34]*An-Nahār* (Beirut), 19 May 1969; *Al-Ahrār* (organ of the Ba‘th party in Lebanon), 22 May, 17 July, and 21 August 1970; Workers’ Pension and Social Security Law No. 112 of 19 July 1969, *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah* No. 1762 of 1 August 1969; Revolutionary Command Council Resolutions No. 786 of 5 September 1973 and No. 95 of 7 February 1974; *Al-Waqāi‘-ul-‘Irāqiyyah* No. 2320 of 17 February 1974; *L’Orient-Le Jour* (Beirut), 28 May 1975; *Iraq Today* (Baghdād), I, 12, 15 March 1976, p. 20; and conversations with Iraqis who do not wish to be identified.

[35]For Sāmarrā‘ī, see also Table 58-2.

[36]The Arab Socialist Movement, the Congress of Socialist Nationalists, the Party of Arab Toilers, the Party of Revolutionary Workers, the Socialist Party of Unity, the Nationalist League, the Nationalist Congress, the Movement of Socialist Unionists, and the Arab Socialist party.

[37]Letter from the Central Command of the Communist party dated late May 1970, and published in *An-Naṣīr* (“The Partisan”), a bulletin of the Iraqi Revolutionary Assembly in Britain, and in *Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 26 October 1970.

[38]*Munāḍil-ul-Ḥizb*, December 1968.

[39]August 1968 statement by the Communist Party (Central Command), *Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 2 September 1968.

[40]August 1968 statement by the Central Committee of the Communist party, *ibid*.

[41]*An-Nahār*, 6 September 1968.

[42]*Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 13 September 1968.

[43]Statement of the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist party issued in mid-October 1968 and quoted in *Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b* of early July 1969.

[44]*An-Nahār*, 13 November 1968.

[45]Statement of the Communist Party of Iraq of 11 November 1968, published in *Al-Akhbār*, 1 December 1968.

[46]Statement by Ṣaddām to *Aṣ-Ṣayyād* of 6-13 March 1969.

[47]*Ath-Thawrah* (Baghdād), 25 November 1968.

[48]For Ṣalāḥ ‘Umar al-‘Alī, see Table 58-2.

[49]Statements by ‘Azīz al-Ḥājj on Baghdād television on 3 April 1969, and to *Aṣ-Ṣayyād's* correspondent in May, *Al-Anwār*, 5 April 1969, and *Aṣ-Ṣayyād*, 8-15 May 1969.

[50]Statement by the Iraqi Revolutionary Assembly in Britain, *Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 9 February 1970; and appeal by the Iraqi Students' Association in Britain, *Al-Ḥurriyyah*, 19 October 1970.

[51]So did the remaining members of the Politbureau-Ḥamīd Khaḍr aṣ-Ṣāfī and Kāḍhim Riḍa aṣ-Ṣāfāīr–and others.

[52]*Al-Anwār*, 5 April 1969.

[53]The East Germans agreed to lend 30 million dīnārs to Iraq and to build factories for Iraq's Ministries of Industry, Oil, Agrarian Reform, Communications, and Municipal and Rural Affairs, *An-Nahār*, 3 July 1969.

[54]The pact with the Soviets provided, among other things, for a loan to Iraq of 25 million dīnārs, which was to be used for the development and exploitation of the North Rumailah oil field, *An-Nidā*, 6 July and *An-Nahār, 7* July 1969.

[55]‘Abd-ul-Wahhāb Maḥmūd, a Communist sympathizer, who polled 674 votes, was elected president of the guild, and ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah, member of the Polit-bureau of the Communist party, who polled 608 votes, won a seat on the guild's council, *Aj-Jumhūriyyah*, 10 January 1970.

[56]Report of the Extended Meeting of the Central Committee held in October 1969, *Al-Akhbār*, 21 December 1969. The report had here in mind the murder in June 1969 of Sattār Khuḍair, a member of the Central Committee (see *Al-Akhbār*, 13 July 1969) and the "abduction" in September of ‘Abd-ul-Amīr Sa‘īd, a member of the cadre (see *Al-Akhbār, 7* December 1969).

[57]For the text of the statement, see *An-Nidā*, 21 January 1970.

[58]*An-Nidā*, 5 and 16 April and 30 May 1970; *At-Akhbār*, 17 May 1970; and *An-Nahār*, 13 April and 2 July 1970.

[59]*An-Nidā*, 5 July 1970; and *Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b*, early August 1970.

[60]*At-Ta'ākhī*, 2 July 1970; and *Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b*, early August 1970.

[61]*Aṣ-Ṣayyād*, 30 July-6 August 1970.

[62]*Ath-Thawrah*, 10 July 1970.

[63]This is a point that the Communists had already made in *Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b* of mid-June 1970.

[64]*Ṭarīq-ush-Sha‘b*, early August 1970.

[65]This formula appeared in an Iraqi Communist party statement of September 1968, and was affirmed in the Central Committee report read by Party Secretary ‘Azīz Muḥammad at the Second Party Congress of September 1970, see *Barnāmiju-l-Ḥizb-ish-Shuyū‘ī-l-Irāqī wa Niḍhāmuhu-d-Dākhilī (“The* Program of the Iraqi Communist Party and Its Internal Rules”) approved by the Second Congress of the party (September 1970), pp. 13 and 22. See also chapter twelve of the Program, pp. 111-112.

[66]For the text of the statement announcing the creation of the “Partisan Forces,” see *An-Nidā, 7* March 1970.

[67]Central Committee report read at the Second Party Congress of September 1970, *Bamāmiju-l-Ḥizb-ish-Shuyū‘ī*, p. 13.

[68]*Al-Akhbār*, 24 January and 21 February 1971.

[69]*An-Nidā*, 12 February 1971.

[70]For Thābit Ḥabīb al-‘Ānī, see Table 51-2.

[71]*An-Nidā*, 13 May 1971.

[72]*Marxism Today*, November 1971.

[73]*An-Nahār* of 9 April 1971.

[74]*An-Nahār*, 25 June 1971.

[75]For the text of the treaty, see *An-Nidā*’, 11 April 1972.

[76]*Ibid*.,12 April 1972.

[77]For the text of the statement of the Politbureau, see *Al-Akhbār*, 11 December 1971. Emphasis in the original.

[78]For aṭ-Ṭālabānī, see Table 58-5. For ‘Āmer ‘Abdallah, see Table 31-1.

[79]Statement of 15 May 1972 by the Politbureau of the Iraqi Communist party, *Al-Akhbār*, 27 May 1972.

[80]*Aj-Jumhūriyyah* (Baghdād), 18 July 1973.

[81]An-Nahār, 15 July 1973.

[82]Iraq, *Al-Iḥṣā'-uth-Thaqāfī li 1975* (Cultural Statistics for 1975), p. 19.

59 Conclusion

[1]See pp. 117, 173-175, 220-221, 293-294, and 1141-1142.

[2]See p. 295.

[3]See pp. 424 and 983 (the ‘Aqd-ul-Akrād district is a part of Bāb-ish-Shaikh).

[4]See pp. 293-294 and 298; Tables 41-2, 41-3, and 41-4; pp. 995 and 998; Tables 58-2 and 58-3; and pp. 1088-1092.

[5]See pp. 134 ff., 150-151, 551, 804-805, 898, 978, and 983 (the Shurūgīs or Shargāwiyyas lived in Ath-Thawrah town in 1963).

[6]See pp. 999-1000.

[7]see Table 5-1.

[8]See Table 5-3.

[9]See p. 274 and Table 9-13.

[10]See Table 7-2.

[11]See Table 10-4.

[12]See pp. 352-353 and Table 10-3.

[13]See pp. 351-352.

[14]See pp. 105-107.

[15]See also pp. 34 and 282-283.

[16]See pp. 32, 34, and 351-361.

[17]Iraq, *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1973*, p. 70.

[18]Their membership counted 45,767 in 1966, 110,472 in 1970, and 203,000 in 1974; Iraq, *Statistical Handbook of the Republic of Iraq for 1957-1967* (1968), p. 139; *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1970*, p. 105; and *Al-Qiṭā‘-uz-Zirā‘ī*, pp. 6-7. The cooperatives are meant to organize agricultural production, assist their members in fulfilling the production plan, supply them with seeds, fertilizers, and the necessary implements, market their products, and introduce needed improvements.

[19]The collective farms are based on collective ownership of the means of production, collective work, and distribution of income according to cooperative principles. Article 38 of Agrarian Reform Law No. 117 of 1970 refers.

[20]Socialist Arab Ba‘th Party, Central Political Report of the Eighth Regional Congress, *Aj-Jumhūriyyah* (Baghdād), 7 March 1974, p. 4.

[21]For treatments of these and other aspects of the agricultural problem, see John L. Simmons, “Agricultural Development in Iraq: Planning and Management Failures,” *Middle East Journal*, Spring 1965, pp. 129 ff.; and Robert A. Fernea, “Land Reform and Ecology in Post-Revolutionary Iraq,” *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, XVII, No. 3 (April 1969), pp. 356 ff.

[22]In the period 1958-1967, 349.8 million dīnārs were invested in industry (including mining, electricity, water, and gas) by the central government sector, the self-financing public sector, and the private sector (including the mixed sector), and only 129.3 million dīnārs in agriculture; Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Progress under Planning* (Baghdad, 1972), p. 55.

[23]See above, p. 1095.

[24]Iraq, *Progress under Planning*, p. 66; *An-Nahār* (Beirut), 30 November 1974; and *L’Orient-Le Jour* (Beirut), 16 January 1975.

[25]However, as regards the projected government capital expenditure for 1970-1974 (refer to Table 59-5), it is necessary to bear in mind that actual investment has tended to lag behind planned investment: for the period 1965-1969, the plan achievement ratio of the central governmental sector was only 65 percent; Iraq, *Progress under Planning*, p. 28. For this problem, see also Ferhang Jalal (director general, Industrial Bank of Iraq), *The Role of Government in the Industrialization of Iraq 1950-1965* (London, 1972), pp. 62 ff., and Iraq, Ministry of Planning, *Taqyīm-un-Numuwwī-l-Iqtiṣadī fī-l-‘Iraq 1950-1970* (Evaluation of the Economic Development of Iraq, 1950-1970), by Dr. Jawād Hāshim et al. (mimeographed, undated), I, 81-91.

[26]See above, p. 34; and Iraq, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1959*, p. 68; *1969*, p. 66; and Ministry of Education’s Summary Data of Education in Iraq for the Year 1975-1976.

[27]1958 figure is partly estimated. In 1967 the largest ministry–Defence aside–was that of Education, which comprised 72,401 employees, or 22.7 percent of the total; and the next largest was that of Interior, which embraced 59,842 or 18.8 percent; Iraq, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1969*, pp. 307-308; and *1970*, p. 411.

[28]Iraq, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973*, pp. 401-402, 515, 523, and 545.

[29]The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, *The Military Balance 1973-74*, p. 32.

[30]Iraq, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973*, p. 372.

[31]*An-Nahār* (Beirut), 9 February 1974.

[32]In 1972-1973 alone, 7,509 graduated from Iraq's universities and institutes, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973*, p. 543.

[33]In 1969 the total number of employed Iraqis was 2.5 millions, 1.4 millions of whom were occupied in agriculture; Iraq, *Weekly Gazette of the Republic of Iraq* No. 50 of 16 December 1970, Appendix (1-5), p. 173.

[34]Iraq, *Weekly Gazette of the Republic of Iraq*, No. 50 of 16 December 1970, Appendix (1-5), pp. 281 and 411.

[35]*Ibid*., p. 343; and Iraq, *Statistical Handbook. . . for 1957-1967*, p. 60.

[36]Iraq, *Annual Abstract of Statistics 1973*, p. 416.

[37]Pay increases for all functionaries ranged from 9 to 19 dīnārs a month. There were similar augmentations for the officers and soldiers. *L'Orient-Le Jour* (Beirut), 9 February 1974.

[38]Worth consulting in this regard is a "Preliminary Study regarding the Intermediate Elements in the Towns" by the "Iraqi Revolutionary Assembly in Britain," published in their organ *An-Naṣīr* and in *Al-Ḥurriyyah* (Beirut), 11, 18, and 25 January and 1 February 1971.

[39]See above, p. 836 and Tables 41-2, 41-3, 41-4; 42-1; 58-1; A-49, 55-1, 55-2, 58-2, and 58-3.

[40]See p. 1116.

[41]Based on figures in *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1970*, pp. 414 and 416.

[42]Iraq, *Annual Abstract of Statistics, 1969*, pp. 317-318.

[43]Consult Workers' Pension and Social Security Law No. 112 of 19 July 1969, *Al-Waqāi'-ul-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 1762 of 1 August 1969.

[44]It must be remembered that a large proportion of unskilled laborers lived in *ṣarīfas* or mud huts.

[45]Rent Control Laws No. 6 of 6 August 1958, No. 78 of 24 July 1963, and No. 103 of 26 August 1967, *Al-Waqāi'-ul-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 7 of 9 August 1958, No. 834 of 29 July 1963, and No. 1461 of 31 August 1967.

[46]Law No. 125 of 15 September 1963, *Al-Waqāi'-ul-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 867 of 6 October 1963.

[47]The Central Bank of Iraq, *Al-Bank al-Markazī-al-'Irāqī 1947-1972* (Baghdad, 1972), p. 181. The greater credit facilities to small business are reflected in the rise of the commercial banks' claims on the private sector to 85.4 million dīnārs in 1971 from 38 million dīnārs in 1958, when the lion's share of bank loans went to big merchants, *ibid*., pp. 177 and 182.

[48]See note 45.

[49]The lowest paid draftee receives at present 5¾ dīnārs monthly unless he eats and sleeps at home in which case he gets 8¾ dīnārs (private information). The lowest paid soldier-volunteer draws a basic pay of 9 dīnārs and a high-cost-of-living allowance of 11½ dīnārs; a second lieutenant a basic pay of 30 dīnārs and a *minimum* high-cost-of-living allowance of 26 dīnārs. The comparable income figures for a marshal are 210 and 42 dīnārs, respectively: Law No. 51 of 1964 Amending Army Officers' Service Law No. 89 of 1958; and Revolutionary Command Council Resolution No. 96 of 7 February 1974 and Schedules No. 1 and 2 attachéd thereto, *Al-Waqāi'-ul-'Irāqiyyah*, No. 938 of 15 April 1964, and 2320 of 17 February 1974.

[50]See p. 271 above.

[51]For an explanation of this susceptibility, turn to p. 29 above.

[52]See above, especially pp. 836-847.

[53]See above, pp. 1027-1028, 1062-1063, 1073, and 1092.

[54]See above, p. 1031.

[55]See pp. 1079, 1088-1093, and Tables 58-2 and 58-3.

[56]See Tables 52-1 and 58-1.

[57]For the Ba‘thī category of “active membership,” see p. 1010.

[58]See pp. 1078-1079.

[59]See above pp. 1098 ff.

[60]See above pp. 23 ff.

A. “O Moslems! Listen to This Divine Cry!”

[1]*Abstract of Intelligence*, II, No. 3 of 17 January 1920, para. 35.

[2]Conversation in June 1962 with Arsen Kidour, an Armenian and in 1917 an interpreter of Russian in the British Army of Occupation.

[3]*Abstract of Intelligence*, II, No. 5 of 31 January 1920.

[4]The *Salafiyyah* was in essence a traditionalist movement, but it turned its back on the existing Islam, in which it could only see ugliness and degeneracy, and drew its inspiration from the Islam of the *Salaf*, “*the* Ancestors,” i.e., the Prophet and the Orthodox Caliphs.

[5]The reference is to the Revolt of the Sharīf of Mecca against the Ottomans, which began in 1916. Many Moslems, particularly those of India, felt that the revolt undermined the unity of the Moslem peoples.

[6]This reference to Mu‘āwiyah, the founder of the Umayyad dynasty in A.D. 661 and the bête noire of the Shī‘īs, might appear to be an appeal to the latter’s sectarian sensibilities, but it perfectly accords with the pan-Islamic Salafiyyah thesis.

[7]This is obviously taken from “The Appeal of the Council of People’s Commissars of the R.S.F.S.R. to All the Moslem Toilers of Russia and the East” of December 1917. The text of the appeal was published in Yu. V. Klyuchnikov and Andrei Sabanin, Mezhdunarodnaya Politika Noveishego Vremeni v Dogovorakh, Notakh i Deklaratsiyakh (Moscow, 1926), Part II, pp. 94-96.

[8]Abstract of Intelligence, II, No. 5 of 31 January 1920, Appendix.

[9]See Izvestiya of 6 May 1919, article entitled “Afghanistan and India.”

[10]In the British records the name of the society appears as “Jamiat al-Takhlas al-Sharq al-Islami.”

[11]Later on, in the twenties, Barkatullah would be active on behalf of the Indian independence movement in Weimar Germany, then the ally of Soviet Russia. We last hear of him as a member of an "Orient Club," which was formed in 1926 at Berlin and had pronounced left tendencies. Police (Major J. F. Wilkins') File entitled "League against Colonial Oppression."

[12]Iraqi Police (Major J. F. Wilkins') File entitled "Jam'iyyat Takhlīṣ-ish-Sharq-il-Islāmī." See also Britain, Foreign Office, FO 141, File No. 10770, letter No. 61 of 17 April 1920 from the British Legation Teheran to Lord Curzon of Kedleston, which indicates that the information concerning this society was passed on to the British by the charge d'affaires of the (White) Russian Legation in Persia, who attributed it to "a very reliable and well-informed Russian source."

[13]J. F. Wilkins' File.

[14]FO 141, File No. 10770, letter of 20 June 1921 from the director Special Section to G.S. "I," G.H.Q., Cairo.

[15]Iraqi Police File No. 213, entitled "Muṣṭafa Kemāl Pasha."

[16]Britain, Office of the Oriental Secretary of the High Commissioner (Iraq), (Secret) *Intelligence* Report No. 22 of 15 November 1922, para. 1097.

[17]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 283 on "Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā," and file entitled "Jam'iyyat Takhlīṣ-ish-Sharq-il-Islāmī."

B. The Bolsheviks and the *'Ulamā'* of the Holy Cities

[1]Shī'ī legists and men of religion with power of making independent decisions.

[2]A basic difference between the lesser and the great *mujtahids* was the fact that the decisions of the former were susceptible of challenge.

[3]A general appellation for the men learned in religion.

[4]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 7 on "Sayyid Muḥammad bin Ḥasan aṣ-Ṣadr."

[5]Great Britain, (Confidential) Personalities. Baghdād and Kāḍhimain, p. 28.

[6]*Ibid*.

[7]Great Britain, Oriental Secretary of the British High Commissioner, Iraq, (Secret) Intelligence Report No. 17 of 1 September 1922, para. 838.

[8]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 283 on "Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā"; and Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration of Mesopotamia* (Command 1061) (1920), p. 144.

[9]Iraqi Police (J. F. Wilkins') File No. 283.

[10]The oriental secretary of the high commissioner.

[11]Great Britain, *Review of the Civil Administration*, pp. 144-145. Resht is in the Persian district of Gilan, which was the scene of a revolutionary movement in 1920-1921.

[12]Iraqi Police File No. 213 on "Muṣṭafa Kemāl Pasha" and File No. 283 on "Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā."

[13]Iraqi Police File No. 213 on "Muṣṭafa Kemāl Pasha" and File No. 283 on "Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā."

[14]Iraqi Police File No. 283.

[15]Iraqi Police File No. 7 on "Sayyid Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣadr bin Ḥasan aṣ-Ṣadr."

[16]Iraqi Police File No. 52 on "Shaikh Mahdī al-Khāliṣī."

[17]"The Association of Mesopatamia."

[18]Iraqi Police File No. 283 on "Mirza Muḥammad Riḍā."

[19]There is no other reference to this society in any of the files that I have examined.

[20]Iraqi Police File No. 52.

[21]Actually, the society included also Persian members.

[22]"The Standard of Mesopatamia." The paper was published in Arabic and Persian.

[23]Al-Kashānī played an important role in the political life of Iran in the fifties.

[24]*New Times*, No. 17 of 23 April 1955, p. 13.

[25]Iraqi Police File No. 1868, entitled "Union of 'Ulamā'."

[26]Letter of 4 July 1927 from Wilkins to B. H. Bourdillon, counsellor to the high commissioner, in Iraqi Police File No. 1738.

[27]Iraqi Police File No. 1868.

[28]Iraqi Police File No. 94 on “Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman.” It is clear from a perusal of the bulky file of Abū-t-Timman that some of his close confidants were in the pay of British Intelligence.

[29]OGPU stands for “The All-Union State Political Administration.” Before 1923 it was known simply as GPU. It replaced in 1922 the earlier Cheka –“The All-Russian Extraordinary Commission” (from which the word Chekist). Its principal task was “the protection of the revolutionary order” in the Soviet lands.

[30]The Soviet-run cotton industry Organization.

[31]G. S. Agabekov, *G.P.U. Zapiski Chekista* (“The GPU. The Memoirs of a Chekist”) (1930), p. 159.

C. The Bolsheviks, the Comintern, and the Arab Nationalists

[1]Our principal source is a letter dated 16 August 1927 from Wilkins, Iraq, to Broadhurst, C.I.D., Palestine. The letter is in Iraqi Police File No. 1738.

[2]I.e., the Arab lands east of Suez.

[3]The text of the manifesto is in File No. 1738.

[4]Great Britain, (Secret) *Intelligence Report* No. 2 of 24 January 1924, para. 57.

[5]The text of the report was passed on to British Intelligence by one of its agents in the Palestine Communist party. We shall have occasion to refer to this report a number of times. Hereafter it will be identified simply as Haim Auerbach’s secret report of 8 March 1927. *Abstract of Intelligence of 1927*, para. 609, of 2 June 1927 has reference.

[6]And on other problems, which are considered at another appropriate point.

[7]The E.C.C.I., which was elected by the Congress of the Comintern and was then composed of 25 members, guided, according to the statutes, the work of the Comintern in the interval between congresses.

[8]The plenum was a plenary session of the enlarged E.C.C.I., that is, of the members of the E.C.C.I., plus a certain number of prominent members of the various Communist parties.

[9]Nikolai Bukharin, a member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party and then actually responsible for guiding the work of the International.

[10]The Presidium was an inner bureau of the E.C.C.I., and consisted of 9 to 11 members. It was the equivalent of the Politbureau in the Bolshevik party.

[11]The Palestine party was then responsible for Syria and for the few Communists active in Syria and Lebanon.

[12]Haim Auerbach's secret report of March 8, 1927.

[13]*Ibid*.

[14]Unless otherwise stated, the sources for what follows are: a. a despatch by R. C. Lindsay of the British embassy, Berlin, dated 18 November 1926 and forwarded on 7 January 1927 by L. S. Amery, Downing St., to the high commissioner in Iraq, Sir Henry Dobbs; b. a secret report by Scotland Yard dated 16 December 1926 and enclosed in a letter with date of 3 March 1927 from L. S. Amery to Dobbs; c. a confidential letter dated 11 February 1927 from George Graham, Brussels, to Sir Austen Chamberlain, member of Parliament; d. a secret report dated 23 February 1927 forwarded to J. F. Wilkins by Captain V. Holt, oriental secretary of the high commissioner.

[15]Nehru made the statement in Brussels on February 9, 1927, to the journalist Daniel Martini. Its text was forwarded by the French "Service de la Sûreté Génerale" of Beirut to J. F. Wilkins on 6 October 1927.

[16]See *Pervyi Sezd Narodov Vostoka*. Baku 1-8 sent. 1920g. *Stenograficheskie Otchety*, pp. 212-213.

[17]Scotland Yard's report of 16 December 1926.

[18]Report of 23 February 1927 from Captain Holt to Wilkins.

[19]Entry dated 19 February 1927 in Iraqi Police File No. 1738.

[20]La Ligue Contre L'Impérialisme, "Rapport sur l'activité de La Ligue Contre L'Impérialisme dans les differénts pays du mois de Février au mois de mai 1927," ibid.

[21]The Arab West, i.e., Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.

[22]Letter from Wilkins to Broadhurst, C.I.D., Palestine, dated 28 July 1927, Iraqi Police File No. 1738.

[23]Copies of the notices, circulars, etc., ibid.

[24]Yūsuf's graduation from KUTV is mentioned in Iraqi Police File No. 1831 on "Elie Teper." Teper was in the twenties the vice-chairman of the Palestine Communist party.

[25]Bulletin of the League Against Imperialism (in Arabic), Year 1, No. 2 of 17 August 1929.

[26]*Abstract of Intelligence*, No. 27 for week ending 6 July 1929.

[27]Agabekov, *GPU. Zapiski Chekista*, p. 236.

[28]*Kifāh-us-Sijjīn ath-Thawrī* ("The Struggle of the Revolutionary Prisoner"), No. 14 of 14 February 1954, p. 7. This internal publication, which is by far the most important Communist source on party history, appeared for almost two years, at first in the prison of Nuqrat-is-Salmān and later in that of Kūt.

D. An Overture in Teheran

[1]Agabekov, *GPU. Zapiski Chekista*, pp. 195-196.

[2]The minister of public works in 1928 was ʻAbd-ul-Ḥusain ash-Shallāsh, a native of Najaf and one of the richest merchants of Iraq.

[3]Wilkins was head of the British Special Service and officially "Deputy Inspector General of Police."

[4]Secret Report of 11 May 1931 by J. F. Wilkins to Wing Commander H. Graham of British Air Staff Intelligence. Excerpts of this letter are in Iraqi Police File No. 94 on "Jaʻfar Abū-t-Timman," File No. 462 on "Yasīn Pasha al-Hāshimī," and File No. 1747 on "Rashīd ʻAlī al-Gailānī."

[5]Sayyid Muḥammad left again for Kermanshah on 16 March 1929, and went from there to Teheran, returning to Iraq on 21 March 1929. Iraqi Police File No. 897 on "Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd-ul-Ḥusain."

[6]See *Al-ʻIraq*, No. 2691 of 18 February 1929.

[7]There are prior instances of pro-Russian articles in Iraqi papers. See, for example, the nationalist paper *Al-Istiqlāl*, No. 736 of 14 December 1925.

[8]Iraqi Police File No. 897 on Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd-ul-Ḥusain.

[9]Ḥizb-ush-Sha‘b.

[10]Al-Ḥizb-ul-Waṭanī.

[11]Inasmuch as I was unable to trace the full text of the letter of 11 May 1931, in which J. F. Wilkins made his final report to the British Air Staff Intelligence Headquarters and could only find excerpts from it, I shall cite here the relevant data that I found in the various police files and that must have led to Wilkins’ conclusion.

[12]Report of 1 September 1928 in Iraqi Police File No. 897 on Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain.

[13]Iraqi Police File No. 94 on Ja‘far Abū-t-Timman.

[14]Iraqi Police File No. 94.

[15]*Ibid*.

[16]*Ibid*.

[17]Iraqi Police File No. 897 on “Sayyid Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd-ul-Ḥusain.”

[18]*Ibid*. A relevant entry in the *Abstract of Intelligence* (para. 794 of 21 July 1928) reads that al-Hāshimī was “up to something” in Persia and “may have Bolshevik connections.”

[19]Iraqi Police File No. 897.

[20]The People’s party had by then been enlarged by the inclusion of new elements and had given way to the National Brotherhood (al-Ikhā’ al-Waṭanī).

[21]Secret letter dated 6 March 1928 from J. F. Wilkins to K. Cornwallis, adviser to the minister of the interior. For text of letter see Book One, pp. 329-331.

[22](Secret) Supplement to the Abstract of Intelligence, No. 48 of 1 December 1928, para. 3.

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